# Why the Church?

## A Syllabus of Questions for Use by Discussion Classes

THE INQUIRY
129 East 52nd Street, New York City

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# Why the Church?

## What Is Its Contribution to the Promotion of the Christian Way of Life in the World?

A Syllabus of Questions for Use by Discussion Classes

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*Preliminary Edition*

Commission on the Church of the National Conference on the Christian Way of Life
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# INTRODUCTION

### The Inquiry

This syllabus is issued in connection with an Inquiry that is being conducted in preparation for a National Conference on the Christian Way of Life. Responsibility for this phase of the Inquiry rests with a Commission on the Church and the Christian Way of Life. Three other commissions are conducting similar studies: Christianity and International Relations, Christianity and Industry, and Christianity and Race Relations.

### The National Conference

The national conference will be held when groups throughout the country have become so aroused to the enterprise as to insure that it will be truly national and a real conference. It will aim to clarify and deepen the purpose of those who have shared in The Inquiry and to insure that whatever of value has emerged from the process shall pass into the normal activities of the civic, industrial, social and religious organizations of the country.

### Origin and Aim

This venture had its formal origin in a resolution by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, approving the holding of a national conference on "the meaning of Christianity for human relationships, with especial attention to industry, citizenship, and race relations in the United States, and the function of the Church in social and civic affairs." A nominating committee was appointed to select and convene a national committee which should be wholly free in planning for the conference and independent both as to its findings and as to its financial support.

### A Fourfold Program for a Local Church

It is hoped that many churches and other organizations will carry on a study covering the four phases of the national inquiry. This would involve the creation of local commissions corresponding to the four national commissions named above. These commissions would constitute central discussion groups. In addition to their own study they would also enlist young people's societies, Bible classes, men's and women's organizations, and other such groups to which special assignments would be made. The central groups, or commissions, in each of the four phases of the study would collect and combine the results of the whole study and forward the same to The Inquiry. It would be most interesting and helpful if before forwarding their report the local commissions would hold a miniature conference and present their findings for consideration by the entire organization of which they are a part.

### Correspondence

For the sake of brevity the National Conference on the Christian Way of Life is referred to as The Inquiry. For further information address The Inquiry, 129 East 52nd Street, New York City.

### How to Use This Syllabus

*Individual study and group discussion.*—The questions may be used by individuals, and it is hoped that such use may be widely made. The best results will be secured through group discussion. In any case it is earnestly requested that the results be preserved and reported for use in the revision of further editions of this syllabus which is now issued in tentative form. These results of individual study and group discussion will later be used by the Commission on the Church in preparing its report for the national conference.

*Length of course.*—It is desirable that groups shall hold from six to twelve sessions. In the preparation of this outline

the objection was made that it was too long and too elaborate for use by busy church people. This criticism occasioned real concern, for the enterprise largely fails unless the help of many of the people who constitute the rank and file of the church membership can be enlisted. The questions were reduced, therefore, as much as seemed consistent with what was felt to be the need of facing squarely the pertinent issues that are being raised in these days. The impossibility of discussing adequately at any one session all the questions included in a single section is frankly recognized, and the suggestion is made that *each group should select those chapters and questions which it deems most important and valuable for its use.* It is better to treat one or two questions of each section fully than to pass hastily over the entire outline.

*Help for leaders.*—Leaders of discussion groups on this and other subjects will find help in a pamphlet entitled "A Cooperative Technique for Conflict," a little treatise on discussion. It may be obtained from The Inquiry, 129 East 52nd Street, New York City. "The Why and How of Discussion," by Professor Harrison Elliott, can be had from the Association Press, 347 Madison Avenue, New York City.

### The Method of This Syllabus

The approach to the subject represented by this phase of The Inquiry is from the point of view of the average church member. This accounts for the absence of questions calling for a more extended historical and philosophical background or for the time and special ability required for research work.

There are twelve sections, these covering for the most part the principal functions of the Church. After extended suggestion and criticism by many persons representing varied points of view and experience a set of questions has been prepared on each section. These questions are intended in every case to stimulate discussion and not to call for mere affirmative or negative answers as to matters of fact. The last chapter,

"The Church and the Christian Way of Life," is basic to all the others, and its consideration has been left to the end for purposes of emphasis and for the more fruitful discussion that may be had after those provided for in the earlier chapters.

The questions are followed by comment and quotations from current literature. It is not claimed that these quotations are in any sense authoritative, or exhaustive of the positions held by individuals or schools of thought, nor that they are the best that might be found. They are presented simply as illustrations of what is being thought and said by persons whose judgment is entitled to consideration. They are not to be considered by groups as in any sense to be used as the source of their answers to the questions. Their sole purpose is to stimulate thought and to promote intelligent discussion. It is earnestly requested that all who use the syllabus will not only report to The Inquiry the results of their study for the Commission's report to the national conference, but will also contribute to an improved edition of this syllabus and to future studies to be conducted by the Commission by offering frank and constructive criticisms of the questions and the method employed and by naming sources from which other and better citations may be made.

Three other considerations need to be taken into account by all who use this course. Those who believe in the divine origin and the final authority of the Church may deem it superfluous, if not sacrilegious, to raise the question "Why the Church?"; but let them remember that many sincere seekers after truth cannot rest content with authority or tradition, however venerable, but must examine facts, claims and values for themselves.

The second consideration that all should have in mind is that this study of the Church is made wholly from the point of view of its mission as an agency to help forward the Christian

way of life among men. At the very end of the syllabus there will be found a section on the Christian Way of Life. Some may wish to bring this forward and to study it first. In any case, it should be kept definitely in mind as the central thought around which the entire study revolves.

The third consideration that must be carefully regarded is the fact that for the purposes of this syllabus and the interests of those to whom it is primarily addressed, one whole point of view (if not one aggregate body of ordered conviction), has largely been left out of account. It is important to remember that for great numbers of Christians today the answer to the question which is the title of this whole syllabus ("Why the Church?") could be given in a simple and categorical fashion. This is not because they would exclude the various considerations that come up here for discussion, but rather because of the premises and preconceptions which in large part predetermine an entirely different method of investigation and a totally different type of answer. Certain bodies of Christians have sustained the religious and cultural upheaval and revolution of the sixteenth century—as for example the Roman Catholic Church, and, in many respects, the Anglican Communion—or have maintained themselves through that period without any particular alteration in point of view or reconsideration of their fundamental positions, such as for example the Eastern Orthodox Church with its sixteen divisions, and the lesser Eastern Churches. These Christian Communions have in common a view of the Church which, while it does not preclude discussion and examination, yet by its very premise reveals a different emphasis and point of view in regard to the whole matter. Any reader who may care to know somewhat more fully concerning the notion of "The Church" in Roman Catholic thought, can be referred to the Catholic Encyclopedia, Wilhelm and Scannell's "Manual of Catholic Theology," or to Pohle's translation of Preuss'

"Dogmatic Theology." For the doctrine of the Anglican Church, typical expositions of the "Catholic" emphasis and interpretation may be found in Darwell Stone's "Outlines of Christian Dogma" (particularly chapters 9-13), his "The Christian Church," and F. J. Hall's volume, "The Church and the Sacramental System." For the Orthodox Eastern Church the reader may be referred to F. Gavin's "Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought," lectures 4 and 5, or to Macarius' "Introduction à la théologie orthodoxe." How significant and fundamental the difference in point of view of the Christians of this vast group, numbering by various estimates from 400,000,000 to 500,000,000, may be easily suggested by reference to such topics as are treated in Chapters I-VI, where the divergence would be especially marked. The reader, student, leader or member of a discussion group must always bear this consideration in mind, in order to make allowance for this difference in outlook and compensate thereby for the limited character of the special considerations put forward in this syllabus.

# CHAPTER I

## WHY THE CHURCH?

### Questions

1. THE CHURCH AND OTHER COMMUNITY AGENCIES.
Make a list of the things your church is actually doing for the community. What other agencies are either directly or indirectly doing these same things? Is the church or are the other agencies better equipped for doing these things worthily? Which would you prefer to see doing them? Why?

2. THE DISTINCTIVE VALUE OF THE CHURCH.
Which of the things done by your church for the community and the world are not done by any other agency? If they were not done at all, what difference would it make? Compare what you conceive to be the distinctive potential value of a church with the actual services rendered by the churches you know. Are the actual values easily and obviously available for all people? What is the real business of a church? Wherein do the churches you know fail to achieve their real business? Why do you think this is the case?

3. THE CHURCH AND THE INDIVIDUAL.
How does the church actually affect individual life in making one a better person in daily human relationships? In meeting personal religious needs? If you think it fails to do so, state how. Do you know individuals who seem to show in their own lives the values they are getting through their relationships to the church? Are there individuals active in the church who seem to you to be getting little of value from these relationships? Why the

gain or the failure to gain in each case? What contribution does the church make to its members through directing them to needs and opportunities for service?

4. THE NEED FOR THE CHURCH.
Is the organized Church essential to the production of such an aggressive type of religious life as is required for the realization of the Christian way of life in the world? Can you justify the Church's continued existence and the present cost of its maintenance in time and money? How? If the Church as an organization were blotted out (including its property, ordinances, organizations and official leadership) how much of it would you work to restore? Give reasons for your answer. Under what conditions, if ever, is the individual justified in withdrawing from the Church (or from a church) for the sake of better serving the interests of the Kingdom of God? Can the interests of the Kingdom of God be served worthily by an individual entirely apart from church relationships?

5. THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.
What illustrations from the New Testament or from church history can you cite which may assist in answering the question—Why the Church? If you were convinced that the history of the Church fully assures both the necessity for and the usefulness of such an organization in years past, what present and what probable future significance would you be led to assert for the Church as a result of this conviction? Does past utility clearly presage future utility? Does the evidence seem to you clearly to show that the Church has a distinctive mission in the world which no other institution could fulfil? Is the work of the Church comparable with that of any other institution? What facts would seem to you to assure the permanence of the Church? Would such an assured permanence suggest a static condition or a progressive adaptation to

need and environment? If the former, how explain the changing conditions within the Church through the years of its history? If the latter, why assume that any present feature of the Church is permanent and not subject to change? Do you regard the Church as an organism or as an organization?

**Comment**

The Church cannot be taken for granted today as it was a generation or two ago. Why the Church? is a question that many are asking formally and one that a far larger number are answering practically—and negatively—by simply ignoring it. An inquiry as to the Christian way of life in industry, race relations and international affairs cannot escape asking, "What about the Church as the organized agency for advancing the Christian way that we should wish to see prevail?" And an inquiry as to the Church and the Christian way of life appropriately begins by asking, "Why the Church anyhow?"

It is of importance that the word "Church" be carefully defined as it is used, of course, in different senses, and the discussion can easily become confused. The Church has been called the "one undivided living organism composed of those who are so vitally joined to Jesus Christ that they share His life with God and men." Many other definitions might be given. It has been agreed for the purpose of this discussion, however, that we shall think of the Church as the aggregate number of professed followers of Christ who find organized expression in general bodies (the separate Communions) and in local congregations. When referring to the Church as a whole or as a general body we capitalize the word. The discussion group should avoid waste of time by making sure that this and other such terms are defined in advance so that there may be common understanding by the members of the group. On account of its manifold divisions there is nothing which

actually and fully corresponds to the Church in the larger and more general sense. It may be that some, therefore, will wish to substitute "institutionalized Christianity," or some such term, for this more general use of "Church."

The suggested approach to the subject (in the questions at the beginning of this chapter) recognizes that there are many agencies in the community that are rendering real service in human betterment. The case for the Church can be made, if at all, only on the basis of its having a distinctive mission and service. Let us deal fairly with this issue, remembering that the project in which we are engaged stands not for propaganda, but for inquiry.

Probe your own personal experience and draw on the experience of others to discover what the Church actually contributes to the making of better persons in social relationships, to the meeting of personal religious needs, and to the creation of better social institutions.

The crux of this section is in the fourth group of questions. Granted that we need religion and that we need fellowship we must still consider whether the Church as a formal organization is either necessary or helpful. Indeed, there are those who believe that institutionalism is the foe of life, that the Church is now standing in the way of Religion. Granted that the Church is necessary, it may be that only as it is greatly changed in its nature and in the understandings of its mission will it really serve the Christian way of life. Consider the significant economic questions involved, as indicated in the vast aggregate annual expenditures and the still greater sum involved in permanent investments. Consider how much of the present organization of the Church you would wish to conserve. Of course, it may be true that what the churches really need is a larger and better personnel and financial backing, and that you would wish to add to rather than to subtract from the institution as such.

The following quotations reveal different points of view that need to be considered:

Jesus does not seem to have wished or to have supposed it likely that His followers should form corporations, possessing huge wealth, achieving such power that they could impose their will on kings. It seems wildly improbable that He anticipated the existence of churches, called by His name, which in their eagerness for wealth and power would set His cross on the banners of armies, and in order to maintain His cause would resort to force, conquest, bloodshed and oppression. That, unless His teaching has been wholly misrepresented, is the very last thing He would wish His followers to do. . . .

The development of the Church into a world power was inevitable.

Unless the Gospel of Christ had failed altogether and the knowledge of His teaching had died out of the world, nothing else could possibly have happened except what did happen.

The moment the Gospel won the hearts of men, as it did at once in all sorts of places, some kind of organization of those who professed to be disciples became necessary. Christians felt themselves to be, and were recognized by outsiders to be, members of a society. And a society must have rules, if only to settle who are members of it and who are not, and how members are to behave on the occasions of their meeting. No society can exist for very long without the possession of corporate property.[1]

Institutionalism, it is held, tends to fetter the free spirit of religion. Miss Underhill thus states the issue and the case for the Church:

That which we are now concerned to discover is the necessity underlying this conflict; the extent in which the institution on one hand serves the spiritual life, and on the other cramps or opposes its free development. It is a truism that all such institutions tend to degenerate, to become mechanical, and to tyrannize. Are they then, in spite of these adverse characters, to be looked on as essential, inevitable, or merely desirable expressions of the spiritual life in man; or can this spiritual life flourish in pure freedom?

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[1] James A. Hannay, "Can I Be a Christian?" pp. 51, 55.

This question, often put in the crucial form, "Did Jesus Christ intend to form a Church?" is well worth asking. Indeed, it is of great pressing importance to those who now have the spiritual reconstruction of society at heart. It means, in practice: can men best be saved, regenerated, one by one, by their direct responses to the action of the Spirit; or, is the life of the Spirit best found and actualized through submission to tradition and contacts with other men—that is, in a group or church? And if in a group or church, what should the character of this society be? But we shall make no real movement towards solving this problem, unless we abandon both the standpoint of authority, and that of naive religious individualism; and consent to look at it as a part of the general problem of human society, in the light of history, of psychology, and of ethics. . . .

I think we can say that the church or institution gives to its loyal members:

1. Group-consciousness.
2. Religious union, not only with its contemporaries but with the race, that is with history. This we may regard as an extension into the past—and so an enrichment—of that group-consciousness.
3. Discipline; and with discipline a sort of spiritual grit, which carries our fluctuating souls past and over the inevitably recurring periods of slackness, and corrects subjectivism.
4. It gives culture, handing on the discoveries of the saints.

In so far as the free-lance gets any of these four things, he gets them ultimately, though indirectly, from some institutional source.

On the other hand the institution, since it represents the element of stability in life, does not give, and must not be expected to give, direct spiritual experiences; or any onward push towards novelty, freshness of discovery and interpretation in the spiritual sphere. Its dangers and limitations will abide in a certain dislike of such freshness of discovery; the tendency to exalt the corporate and stable and discount the mobile and individual. Its natural instinct will be for exclusivism, the club-idea, conservatism and cosiness; it will,

if left to itself, revel in the middle-aged atmosphere and exhibit the middle-aged point of view.[2]

Another summary of the gains and losses of institutionalism with a hint of its inevitableness is given by Professor Brown, of Union Theological Seminary, New York City:

In this process of transmission an indispensable part is played by the institution. We saw that institutions are the means which society uses to protect its expanding spiritual life. Institutions perpetuate the life-work of individuals by creating forms through which those who come after may have convenient access to their distinctive message. They guard the spiritual gains of the past. They safeguard the nascent spiritual life of the present. Churches are the shells of religion. They give social sanction to beliefs and practices which have proved useful. They set a standard by which to direct energies which without such direction might go astray. Without their help religion could not be perpetuated. But this service is rendered at a price. The shell protects the expanding life within, but there comes a time when it also cramps it. There are moments when the fetters placed upon freedom by institutional life are heavier than can be borne. There is then no alternative but to break the shell. But the newly-won freedom will not remain long unprotected. It must make a shell of its own in order to endure.[3]

Sharp differences of opinion emerge in the following quotations:

It would seem far more reasonable to ask, "Can Christianity survive with the Church?" than to ask "Can Christianity survive without the Church?" . . . If all should come to realize that an official Christian Church by its very nature must be un-Christian, it would vastly accelerate the religious reconstruction which is in any case inevitable.[4]

The history of Christianity, with its encrustation and suffocation in dogmas and usages, its dire persecutions of the

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[2] Evelyn Underhill, "The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today," pp. 155, 156; 161, 162.

[3] William Adams Brown, "Imperialistic Religion and the Religion of Democracy," pp. 60, 61.

[4] Rev. J. E. McAfee, "Can Christianity Tolerate the Church?" *The New Republic,* January 18, 1919, p. 332.

faithful by the unfaithful, its dessication and its unlovely decay, its invasion by robes and rites and all the tricks and vices of the Pharisees whom Christ detested and denounced, is full of warning against the dangers of a Church.[5]

It is a chief value of religious institutions that they introduce a measure of law and of discipline into what otherwise tends to become—and, except in the strongest religious spirits, I think actually does become—a somewhat fluid religious life. . . . In our generation the volume of discipline has been greatly relaxed. We see everywhere a growing contempt for all rule and tradition.[6]

The veriest tyro in the history of the American colonies is aware of the enormous influence exerted by the Church in laying the foundations of the American Commonwealth. That work could not have been done apart from the institutions of religion. It was done not by the spirit of Christianity alone, but by that spirit incorporated in a religious system that was adequate to the social needs of the early colonists. The Church built the towns, erected responsible government, planted the schools, taught the Indians, extended the frontiers and created the traditions which remain today as the bulwark of our liberties.[7]

If any one has fault to find with the Church, and thinks it of no use, let him consider how deeply rooted its needs are in the nature of man. It cannot be destroyed. If it comes to an end in one form, it springs up anew in another. Cut down the old trunk, new shoots spring up from the root. It cannot be destroyed; for some sort of a church is needed by man for his moral life, growth, peace, comfort.[8]

The following references to the New Testament records may be noted in the consideration of the last question: Matthew xvi; Acts xiii; Ephesians ii, 11; iii, 12; iv, 1-16.

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[5] H. G. Wells, "God the Invisible King," p. 164.

[6] Dean W. R. Inge, *Christian World Pulpit*, March 2, 1922.

[7] Raymond Calkins, "The Christian Church in the Modern World," pp. 23, 24.

[8] James Freeman Clarke, "Common Sense in Religion," p. 244.

# CHAPTER II

## THE CHURCH AND WORSHIP

### Questions

1. THE VALUE OF WORSHIP.

   List the reasons why people go to church. Which reasons represent their religious needs? List the reasons for their course commonly given by people who claim to believe in religion but who seldom go to church. In their case are religious needs simply neglected? In how far do you think their reasoning is valid?

   a. Just what do you mean by worship? Is it listening to sermons? Is it the sense of social unity in a corporate act of the praise of God? If so, why does God need to be praised? What purpose is served by ascribing to God qualities which, if He possesses them, He is already aware of? Is worship something you do for yourself, for your neighbor, or for God? Which faculty of man is most employed in worship? Is it an attitude of the individual will in relation to others and to God or is it an intellectual recognition of the claims of God on ourselves and on others and a symbolic expression of those claims? How do the sacraments enter into worship?

   b. Does public worship contribute anything to spiritual development? If so, what does such worship contribute? If not, why has the practice of social worship persisted? How is the value and effectiveness of worship to be measured? Is solitude to be sought for its possible contribution to the life of the spirit as well as social worship?

c. What reasons would you give for regularity in attendance at church worship? Are there reasons to the contrary? If so, what are they? Should there be greater adaptation as to time, duration and conduct of public worship to meet varying human habits and needs? In what ways?

d. What bearing does one's conception of God have on a sense of the duty and the nature of worship? For instance, would a trend among Christians toward a conception of God as immanent in all of life make for an emphasis on public, corporate worship or for a contrary emphasis? What of the view of God as transcendent? How does Christian worship differ from worship as exemplified by followers of the non-Christian faiths? To what extent does the conception of God held by the rising generation grow out of worship as commonly conducted? What contribution to one's conception of God might fairly be expected to come through experiences attained by participation in worship?

2. Worship and Social Action.

How far does worship as commonly conducted affect the attitudes and practices of individuals in relation to social wrongs? Is ordinary worship a sedative or a stimulant?

a. Do people like to have the thought of human wrongs and world needs brought prominently into their worship?

b. Is there a felt need for personal comfort and inspiration on the part of the average attendant at public worship? Is or is not this the primary need of average folks with respect to the church and its ministers? If not, what is their primary need? Is or is not the need for comfort of soul amid the tragedies of life and the need for inspiration in the face of forces that seem to oppose or to frustrate character development such that

the planning of social worship to meet these needs is fully justified?

c. Is it desirable or possible to keep all mention of social questions out of church worship? If not, what limitations, if any, are to be placed on the treatment of such subjects?

d. Would you say that worship is the main function of the Church and the promotion of righteousness incidental, or do you hold a contrary view? How would you state your position?

3. Changes in Worship.

What, if any, changes in the worship of your own church would you like to have effected?

a. What parts of the worship seem of most value and in what ways? What are of least value? Does or does not the sermon seem to you to integrate naturally and helpfully with worship?

b. Should or should not public worship have a greater effect on daily personal and social attitudes and practices, and if so, how can this be accomplished?

c. Should your church make a larger or a less use of ceremonial or symbolism? If so, explain why, and indicate what changes should be made in the conduct of services of worship and how these should be brought about?

d. If you favor more opportunities for the participation of the congregation in worship, what forms would you like to have it take?

**Comment**

From time immemorial worship has been a major function of the Church, and sometimes almost its sole function. The object of this section is to inquire as to what influence worship has or may have in furthering the Christian way of life.

Throughout the discussions it must be kept in mind that worship is literally worth-ship. Divine worship is the ascribing of worth to God.

The first group of questions raises the issue that one meets commonly in these days as to the possibility of maintaining a Christian life at its best without public worship.

A well-known columnist, discussing compulsory chapel attendance in the colleges, says:

> Waiving the question of whether compulsory chapel fosters a spirit of careful, sympathetic examination, I deny that anybody can profit by vicarious religious experience. The human soul must come upon these things in solitude. What others have felt and learned is of little use. Religion was not born nor has it been well maintained in churches. There was a lonely man who went out into a desert and knew spiritual travail. Why should we look to chapels and cathedrals to perpetuate His experience?[1]

Consider the force of St. Paul's saying (Eph. iii, 18, 19) that you "may be able to comprehend *with all saints* what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ," which may indicate his conviction that Christ can be fully known only in a fellowship.

The Rev. Percy Dearmer, pleading for "The Recovery of Public Worship," asserts "that we shall never succeed in preaching people back to church; they will come back to church only because they want to, and they will want to only when our services are more interesting, significant and beautiful." He concludes:

> The people of Britain, of America, and of the whole world have already in their majority drifted away from the churches. They will be won back only if we make public worship so reasonable and beautiful that they come again to find their highest moments in it and to take delight in it. For this to happen we have to deal with every art now debased in the service of God, to eliminate as much of the evil

[1] Heywood Broun, "It Seems to Me," *New York World*, June 10, 1924.

at once as we can; and then to begin the very difficult work of reconstruction, gradually building up, not one type of service, but many, which shall appeal to all that is best in the wisest, most understanding, most sincere men and women, which shall satisfy the aspirations that all have in their desire for goodness, for beauty, and for truth.[2]

On the relation of the sermon to worship, Dr. James Denney says:

If the sermon in church is what it ought to be—if it is an exhibition not of the preacher but of Jesus—there should be nothing in it even conceivably in contrast with worship, but the very reverse. What can be more truly described as worship than hearing the word of God as it ought to be heard, hearing it with penitence, with contrition, with faith, with self-consecration, with vows of new obedience? If this is not worship in spirit and in truth, what is?[3]

However strong Dr. Denney's position, as just stated, may be, it does not meet the current objection to the sermon as an unpedagogical attempt to teach by exegetical monologue. Apparently the same kind of protest is developing against the sermon in connection with the service of worship as is being expressed in college circles against the lecture method of imparting truth.

Read the following quotations, not for ready-made conclusions but to stimulate your own thinking:

Were we truly reasonable human beings, we should perhaps provide openly and as a matter of course within the Christian frame widely different types of ceremonial religion, suited to different levels of mind and different developments of the religious consciousness. To some extent this is already done: traditionalism and liberalism, sacramentalism, revivalism, quietism, have each their existing cults. But these varying types of church now appear as competitors, too often hostile; and not as the complementary and graded expressions of one life, each having truth in the relative, though none in the absolute sense. Did we more openly acknowledge the char-

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[2] *Review of the Churches,* April, 1924, p. 211.

[3] James Denney, D.D., "The Way Everlasting," pp. 104, 105.

acter of that life, the historic Churches would no longer invite the sophisticated to play down to their own primitive fantasies; to sing meaningless hymns and recite vindictive psalms, or lull themselves by the recitation of litany or rosary which, admirable as the instruments of suggestion, are inadequate expressions of the awakened spiritual life. On the one hand, they would not require the simple to express their corporate religious feeling in Elizabethan English or Patristic Latin; on the other, expect the educated to accept at face-value symbols of which the unreal character is patent to them. Nor would they represent these activities as possessing absolute value in themselves.

To join in simplicity and without criticism in the common worship, humbly receiving its good influences, is one thing. This is like the drill of the loyal soldier; welding him to his neighbors, giving him the corporate spirit and forming in him the habits he needs. But to stop short at that drill, and tell the individual that drill is the essence of his life and all his duty, is another thing altogether. . . . If the religious institution is to do its real work in furthering the life of the Spirit, it must introduce a more rich variety into its methods; . . . it must give to them all its hoarded knowledge of the inner life of prayer and contemplation, of the remaking of the moral nature on supernatural levels: all the gold that there is in the deposit of faith. And it must not be afraid to impart that knowledge in modern terms which all can understand. . . . In the last resort, criticism of the Church, of Christian institutionalism, is really criticism of ourselves. Were we more spiritually alive, our spiritual homes would be the real nesting places of new life.[4]

For an illuminating discussion of objective and subjective worship in which Roman Catholic and Protestant ideals and practices are analyzed and contrasted one should read Chapter XIV of "The Religious Consciousness," by Pratt. His conclusion runs as follows:

The Sunday morning church service, while often appealing quite admirably to the moral emotions and convictions of the worshipers, seems to many of its best disposed critics and

[4] Evelyn Underhill, "The Life of the Spirit and the Life of Today," pp. 189, 190.

lovers to be lacking exactly on the religious side. The reality of the more-than-human, the relation of the individual to the Determiner of Destiny, the intense emotional realization of the Cosmic—these things are no longer suggested to us in church as they used to be to our fathers. Somehow in our smug security we seem armed against them, even when the preacher tries to bring them home to us. And the enormous throngs who never enter a church door are seldom reminded of them. . . .

It must be said plainly and first of all that objective worship of the sort that aims to please the Deity is a thing of the past. The modern man cannot even attempt to participate in it without conscious hypocrisy. That is not the end of the matter, however. There is a kind of worship that is perfectly objective and sincere and that is quite as possible for the intelligent man of today as it was for the ancient;—namely that union of awe and gratitude which is reverence, combined, perhaps, with consecration and a suggestion of communion, which most thoughtful men must feel in the presence of the cosmic forces and in reflecting upon them. Such was the attitude of Spinoza and Herbert Spencer. Such was the genuinely objective worship of the ancient philosophers of Greece and India, and of many of the Hebrew Psalmists and Prophets. In this act of instinctive self-abasement there is no aim of producing an effect upon oneself; the attitude is as objective as it is natural. Worship is therefore not something to be outgrown. Its forms change with the changing symbols, the changing robes with which man seeks to deck out the Determiner of Destiny. The thing itself is as eternal as is man's finitude. The task of the Church is to stimulate and direct this fundamental human impulse, with what wisdom it can supply.[5]

Dr. Robert Hume, whose field of scholarship is that of comparative religion, says:

There are three features of Christianity which cannot be paralleled anywhere among the religions of the world:

The Character of God as a Loving Heavenly Father.

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[5] James Bissett Pratt, "The Religious Consciousness," pp. 304, 308, 309.

The Character of the Founder as Son of God and Brother of All Men.

The Work of a Divine Universal Holy Spirit.

These three essential and distinctive features of Christianity may be stated systematically in relation to God, the chief essential of all religions, as follows:

1. In God there is something eternal. That aspect of God which perpetually is the creator and loving ruler of human life may best be known as "Father."
2. In God there is something historic. That aspect of God which has come most fully into the compass of a human life, in the gracious character of Jesus Christ, may best be known as his "Son."
3. In God there is something progressive. That aspect of God which like a continual companion is leading human life forward may best be known as "Holy Spirit."[6]

Dr. Henry Hodgkin declares his conviction of how worship relates to the service of man:

The kind of worship that we need as a preparation for the Church's revolutionary activities should provide for the recognition of our intimate relationship with men and women of all races and creeds and classes. This is found by many in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The essential ideas of this form of worship seem to me to be the actual communion of the human personality with the divine, the use of the commonest things of daily life (our food and drink) as a means towards this end, and the sharing of the privileges of life both outward and inward with all our fellows. Just as we are all one in our need of food and drink, and as our dependence upon these necessities takes away the barriers of rank and race, so in our common need of the divine life there can be no dividing walls. Bound in one common life, members of one family, we have a clear duty to share our goods with all. . . . The worship of the Church that is to bring about the Christian Revolution must, either through its sacraments or its silence, or both, contain this element of fellowship with all who suffer and are oppressed, whether for their own fault or not.[7]

[6] Robert Ernest Hume, "The World's Living Religions," pp. 271-277.

[7] Henry T. Hodgkin, "The Christian Revolution," pp. 198, 199.

Professor George A. Coe says:

To see life objectively, discriminatingly, and to reflect upon what we, with God, want it to be—this is of the essence of Christian worship. When we resort to the Church to escape from the problems and the perplexities of human society, we do not follow the Christ who ever takes upon Himself the form of man, ever becomes the servant of man. Worship as escape from this degenerates into non-Christian crowd æstheticism or else into non-Christian clubdom.[8]

Professor Charles P. Fagnani gives his estimate of true religion as follows:

The one only and true religion is the religion of the prophets of Israel and of Jesus of Nazareth. It differs from all others in its conception of God. The distinctive characteristics of this God are: (1) Positively—His supreme concern for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, that is, co-operative human brotherhood; (2) Negatively—His lack of interest in worship, in fact His rejection of it, unless accompanied by supreme devotion to His Kingdom. All other religions make worship and manner of worship the distinctive and essential marks of religion. None of them insist on the reign of justice and love among men on earth as being the supreme concern of their God. It is the all-prevalent emphasis on worship and specific forms of worship as being of divine appointment and obligatory that has divided mankind into hostile, hating groups and prevented combination for the common good. The world-wide acknowledgment of the reasonableness and sufficiency of the prophetic idea of God and His requirements by relegating worship to the category of a non-essential left to individual habit, taste and preference would remove the chief barrier which prevents the union of all mankind into one fraternal group consecrated to the establishment of the Kingdom of God.[9]

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[8] George A. Coe, "A Social Theory of Religious Education," p. 95.
[9] Charles P. Fagnani, "True Religion," a leaflet here quoted in full.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHURCH AS A FELLOWSHIP

**Questions**

1. Fellowship in the Community.

   What are the principal methods by which acquaintance and common interest are promoted in your community? How does your church promote good feeling and friendliness?

   a. Among its own members?

   b. Between its members and the members of other churches?

   c. Between its members and non-members of churches.

   What duty, if any, does the church have for the promotion of fellowship in the three relationships named? Is fellowship a major objective to be sought, or is it a by-product of some other condition or process? If the former, how avoid unreality in search and in outcome? If the latter, of what is it the by-product?

2. Church Fellowship.

   Does church fellowship as you know it actually differ in important respects from the fellowship which other agencies afford? If so, in what ways? If not, should it be different, and how?

   a. What light, if any, does the New Testament give at this point?

   b. What light does church history give?

   c. What meaning and values are there for you in church fellowship that grow out of its long history and continuity, its interracial and super-national character, and the claim that even death does not destroy it?

d. What does Christian love involve with respect to the promotion and maintenance of fellowship?

e. In what ways, if any, may the fellowship of the church group be an aid to its members in maintaining Christian ideals in difficult situations?

3. Obstacles to Fellowship.

What does the Christian way of life require of a church in achieving such fellowship where there are racial, economic, cultural or doctrinal differences?

a. Do you know of a local church that fairly realizes the ideal of fellowship within its membership? If so, how would you account for its spirit?

b. Should a church receive into its membership persons of different racial or national groups? If so, unconditionally, or under what conditions? If not, why not?

c. Is it necessary or desirable that people who worship together should also enter into a common social fellowship? Should fellowship at the communion rail imply fellowship in daily life? Compare the Protestant and the Catholic practice at this point.

d. Some say that the Church should be a kind of laboratory for the testing and demonstration of principles and ideals of fellowship which may ultimately be wrought out in the life of the world. Do you agree with this statement? If so, what changes, if any, should be brought about in your church?

e. Do denominational divisions in your community prove to be a barrier to Christian fellowship? If so, how? What, if anything, can be done to change conditions?

**Comment**

The leader would be greatly helped in getting a background for this study if he were to trace the Greek word *koinonia* (variously translated communion, fellowship) in the

New Testament. Such a study would show the place of fellowship in the early Church.

In "The Spirit" there is a significant chapter, "What Happened at Pentecost," by C. A. Anderson Scott, which may be summarized in the following sentences:

The question still remains, What was the real, primary, and enduring result of the Spirit's coming? And the answer here suggested is that the primary result which was permanent, and that which filled the interval, was what was recognized and described as the "Fellowship." . . . It was a new name for a new thing, community of spirit issuing in community of life; that was the primary result of the coming of the Spirit.[1]

A fair test of the place fellowship has in the later feeling of the Church would be the number of fellowship hymns to be found in its hymnals. The test of the churches' practice must be made in other ways.

The discussion ought to bring out clearly the meaning and purpose of fellowship, and should discover how much validity there is in the claim that is made for Christian fellowship that it is of a distinctive and superior quality as compared, for example, with that of the fraternal order.

The Copec Commission on the Social Function of the Church raises the question as to what substitutes the modern church has to offer in the way of fellowship for the common life of the early Church as reported in Acts ii and iii or for the Church guilds of medieval times:

We recall the days of the early Church, when the Christians had all things in common. We recall the later communism of the great Christian guilds and orders, when those who were bound together by a common Christian purpose or responsibility shared a common purse and a common lot. And we assert that though the times are different and the ideal more difficult of attainment amid the complexity of modern life, the principle of the early Christian communism and of later Christian orders still holds true. Christian people have such

[1] Canon Streeter and Others, "The Spirit," pp. 136, 137.

community of spirit and equality of standing before God as their one Father that they cannot, in principle, suffer each other to endure wide differences of fortune and hardship. Some today are feeling this to the point of experiment in sharing their resources with each other in little local Christian groups comprising members of various social ranks. The Brethren of the Common Table is a case in point, but it is by no means unique. We do not, in quoting it, suggest that such experiments in voluntary Christian communism might remove from our land the reproach of grievous economic inequality and poverty from which it now suffers, but we do say that the passion to share material and cultural advantages (which they exemplify) is the natural passion of the Christian heart, and that we should expect it to manifest itself in all kinds of ingenious and stimulating ways until the social insight of Christian politicians and Christian voters is equal to the task of raising the level of opportunity and culture to a tolerable standard for every member of the community.[2]

Where there are social cleavages it might help in the discussion of fellowship according to the Christian way to consider the problem concretely in the light of one or more of the following incidents:

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[2] C. O. P. E. C. Commission, "The Social Function of the Church," pp. 184, 185. Mr. H. A. Mess, in the Preface to "The Message of C.O.P.E.C.", says: "The Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship held at Birmingham in April, 1924, was an attempt of those Christians who were keenly interested in social questions to clear their own minds and to discover to what extent they were in agreement with one another and where they disagreed; and to put before the whole Christian Church the social message of Christianity and to plead that it be given a greater place in the thought and activity of the Christian Church. In preparation for that Conference twelve Commissions were constituted, consisting of men and women with special knowledge of special subjects, but with different views and different experience in regard to them. These Commissions, aided by reports from groups of Christians all over the country, drew up reports which were submitted to the Conference. The twelve volumes of Reports form a body of Christian social literature without parallel in modern times in range of subject and in range of contributors. That they are in many ways faulty all of those concerned with them would readily admit, but they do represent the conclusions of a number of Christians who have given a great deal of time to considering together social questions in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

An Italian woman, a mother of nine children, at the end of her third lesson in English, looking wistfully at her teacher, asked:

"Lady, you Protestante?"

"Yes," responded the teacher, "and you?" They both waited while the Italian woman was struggling to find English words expressing her meaning. Finally she said slowly:

"Sometimes me, my girl, in dark, go stand by church, hear sing." She indicated a church building near her home.

"Why do you not go in?"

Lifting her shoulders and spreading her hands in an expression of impossibility, she replied, "Know nobody. Everybody look strange at us."[3]

A Japanese man, repeatedly welcomed in a certain church by one of the deacons, ventured to accost him on the street one day, but was amazed to hear the words: "I'm your friend in church but not elsewhere."[4]

I visited a small Sunday school in a community made up largely of Japanese farmers. A couple of white families have been keeping the Sunday school going, and there the white children mix freely with the Japanese children. They exhibit an example of practical Christianity. I was told of a group in the community who did not like the situation and met one night to take the seats out of the church. One lady, a trustee of the church, gave vent to her feelings. She was through with the church, and she was not going to attend any more and be humiliated by having to sit near a Japanese.

When a deaconess for "Italian work" in a church doing work among different nationalities with strict segregation was being urged to consider whether divisions should not be made according to the age of the girls rather than upon nationality since nationality divisions have been overcome in many social settlements, she replied, "Oh, but this is a church!"

The wife of the pastor of a white church in a once fashionable neighborhood now being entered by Negroes stated that problem in these words: "We are troubled about the social

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[3] Mary Clarke Barnes, "Neighboring New Americans," pp. 35, 36.

[4] Sidney L. Gulick, "The American Japanese Problem," p. 170.

ties which may develop between white men and some of the attractive young mulatto girls who come to the church. These girls are often well educated, and some of them can hardly be recognized as having Negro blood. A young man descended from a Mayflower ancestor has fallen in love with one of them and married her. Should we continue to encourage these friendly relations even when the results may be more of such miscegenation?''

Mr. J. H. Oldham, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, in his latest book, says:

In a Church which is conscious of its mission to the world there can be no exclusion or separation on the ground of race. This does not mean that as a matter of convenience members of different races living side by side may not worship in separate congregations. If there are differences of disposition and aptitude between races the genius of each will doubtless find its best expression if the religious life of each is allowed to develop on its own lines. There is nothing in this contrary to the catholicity of the Church of Christ.

But wherever the separation is not a natural segregation but is imposed, a vital and essential truth of Christianity is compromised. It is not for those who are at a distance to pass judgment on what should be done where racial problems are acute. The difficulties in such situations must be acknowledged. Where masses are concerned progress must often be slow. . . . The attitude to be adopted towards it is not merely a question for that part of the Church where the problem is most acute. It is a matter in which the whole Church of Christ is concerned. The essential nature of the witness of the Church to the world is involved. The Church must stand for something in the world's eyes, or it will be swept aside as meaningless. It is committed to the principle that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. On the Christian view the moral issues of sin, redemption, grace, service, brotherhood are so tremendous that natural differences lose their significance. The body of Christ is one. All partake of the one bread. Take away this unity in Christ and the heart falls out of Christianity.[5]

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[5] J. H. Oldham, ''Christianity and the Race Problem,'' pp. 262, 263.

Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin, pastor of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York, which is very inclusive in its membership, says:

The "one class church," in any but the very rare homogeneous community, ought to realize that, whatever Christian service it may render, it is all the while doing the cause of Christ great disservice, and is in need of a radical reorganization and an equally radical spiritual renewal into its Lord's wider sympathies."[6]

Radio makes it possible to hear sermons without going to church. It may diminish fellowship. Or perchance it may introduce people into a larger fellowship. One wonders what this increasing development is to mean twenty-five years hence. An English clergyman, in protesting against the broadcasting of regular church services, says:

I am not thinking primarily of depleted attendance—a consequence already alleged in some cases. The reply is made, of course, that the preacher's message thus reaches a far wider constituency, and actual attendance at church is not a valid criterion of the church's influence.

The Sunday services of the church are the family worship of a Christian fellowship; and hence such services are an inappropriate subject for broadcasting to all and sundry. Moreover, the consciousness that this was being done would, for many worshippers, largely destroy the atmosphere of quiet devotion. There seems indeed more than a suggestion of sacrilege in "listening in" upon the church at prayer. It is the ear of Heaven we seek to reach, not the ear of the world.[7]

The Rev. A. Parkes Cadman, D.D., does not believe in broadcasting regular church services. He says:

When I was asked to connect the Lord's Day morning service of Central Church [Brooklyn, N. Y.] with the radio, I declined the overture because I did not wish to interfere with the general worship of the churches. All denominations contend against a growing disposition to neglect the appointed ordinances of the church, and I had no desire to add to the

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[6] Henry Sloane Coffin, "Some Christian Convictions," p. 201.

[7] Rev. Leyton Richards, *Christian Work,* May 31, 1924, p. 674.

disadvantage which the situation creates, nor did I dream that my message could be as valuable for religious purposes as that of the resident pastor. In town and country he is the father confessor of his flock. No other minister can have the intimate knowledge of his people's spiritual needs which he possesses. Nothing preventable, therefore, should interfere with his main contact as teacher and guide of the local communion. This view I have seen no reason to alter. I am fully aware of the widespread benefits derived from broadcasting the acts of worship and sermons of prominent churches. But I cling to the opinion that the church is the place to hear sermons. There we also render to God the homage which belongs solely to Him. There we magnify the Name which is above every name. There we make intercession for a world which, alas! too often forgets to make intercession for itself. These observations do not apply to those who, because of age, infirmity, or any other sufficient cause are unable to attend church. They do apply, however, to many who violate their vows by their abandonment of social worship. I have not reconciled myself to their attitude, nor am I willing to provide them with any excuse for its maintenance. The radio is no substitute for the church.

With regard to his extraordinary experience in speaking before the microphone on Sundays afternoons, Dr. Cadman continues:

The radio does transmit the subtler essences of personality and so, of preaching. The spiritual atmosphere which is native to every God-seeking soul passes through this mysterious means of audition. The persuasive religious sentiment of the seen audience registers the edification of the unseen audience. Perhaps the greatest marvel of this miracle of modern science is its strange, inexplicable sway in the invisible realm. It has an indefinable power of wooing and winning the weary, the sin-smitten, the back-slidden, the spirits troubled by specters of the mind. The voice "on the air" carries a peculiarly vibrant force, provided it is animated by the spirit of the living God. Dissensions are reduced, agreements are magnified, first principles of faith and morality seem to gain a more speedy and complete access to human

hearts. Roman Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Gentiles, nondescripts, and those of no avowed religious persuasion give clear and convincing testimony concerning the lasting good which this audition communicates.[8]

With regard to the larger problem involved in the wide use of the radio, Mr. E. C. Lindeman says:

Upon first blush each new invention appears as a short-cut to the baffling problem of human adjustments, but if these short-cuts cause malformations in other directions they may eventuate as the shortest routes to destruction. "Modern science has split the anciently established order into a thousand fragments," asserts Mr. Raymond Fosdick. The statement may be accepted; but how, one may ask, is science to rearrange the fragments into a workable unity? Is the unity of mankind to be sought in machines, in externals, or within the complex of personality functioning through the human organism? The former route is simple, easy and conducive to prophecy. The latter route is complicated, difficult and conducive to sober reflection.[9]

The last questions seem to require no elucidation. They go to the heart of the question of fellowship and the Christian way of life. Follow them all the way. Dr. Ernest Fremont Tittle discusses this question in a way that provokes thought:

Would anything be so likely to convince a skeptical world of the integrity of the Church as a demonstration of the democracy which the Church professes? With magnificent rhetoric the Church has proclaimed the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But, unfortunately, she has tolerated class distinctions and class pride within her own organization; and a skeptical world has looked on, sometimes with anger, sometimes with amusement, always with contempt. What if the Church should begin not only to preach brotherhood, but also to practice it? What if the most brotherly organization in town were not the Knights of Pythias, or the Elks' Club, or Mike Fogarty's saloon, but the Christian church? What if the Christian church should become a place

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[8] *Christian Advocate,* January 15, 1925, p. 72.

[9] E. C. Lindeman, "Radio Fallacies," *The New Republic,* April 23, 1924, p. 228.

where Tom, Dick and Harry, together with their wives and children, could meet, not on the basis of an impossible equality which never has existed, and never will exist, but on the basis of a mutual sympathy and good-will which has not always existed, but might exist. In the presence of a Church that merely preaches brotherhood the world will remain cynical till the crack of doom. But in the presence of a Church that dared to practice brotherhood the last vestige of the world's cynicism would be blown away, and the Kingdom of God would come with power in that community.[10]

Consider the problem of a church one of whose members asserts that it has been "just about ruined by fellowship." In order to promote fellowship they built a parish house and developed a social program in the prosecution of which three distinct social cliques appeared.

The experience of unselfish living in a Christian atmosphere as a member of a Christian social group, is, in the last analysis, the one great Christian educator. To teach brotherhood, unselfishness, democracy in textbooks and classrooms will be of no avail if the fellowship of the Church is unbrotherly, selfish, undemocratic, indistinguishable from the life of the world. For then the most powerful educational influence has not been Christian at all.[11]

The Copec report quoted above cites the Society of Friends as an example of real laboratory experimentation in fellowship.

The Society of Friends provides us with a model on a very small scale of a community in which all are brethren and none is master, in which majorities do not override minorities, nor authority exercise un-Christian dominance, in which those who have prestige do not lord it over one another, and those who have vision and genius do not hustle their slower neighbors into speech or action for which they are not individually prepared. The spirit of deference one to another which they characteristically represent is indeed the Christian spirit—

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[10] Ernest Fremont Tittle, "What Must the Church Do to Be Saved?" pp. 28, 29.

[11] Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, "The Teaching Work of the Church," p. 43.

and though it may not be so easily manifested in larger and less homogeneous bodies, we hold that it is the spirit which all Christian bodies need to exemplify in the conduct of all their assemblies, the transaction of all their business, the unravelling of all their conflicts and disagreements, and the exercise of all rule and authority among them. Only so can they present to the world such a model of Christian fellowship within a complicated organism as the world needs to bring the realization of a larger social and political fellowship within the reach of its imagination and its hope.[12]

When the very last question is reached, test the entire organization and personnel of your church societies and their officers in the light of the demands of fellowship. Appraise the sin of snobbishness. Consider whether any new activities or methods need to be added to bring into the fellowship those who are on the margin of the church's life or whether radical changes need to be made in the spirit of the church or any of its organizations or leaders.

The failure of the Church to furnish a signal example of the fellowship for which it stands is noted by Bishop Gore:

Christianity as it has appeared in European society might be commonly regarded as a dogmatic system, true or false; or as a system of ecclesiastical government to be submitted to for the sake of ultimate salvation; or as a national system to be more or less conformed to for the general good. But it certainly has not appeared as the organized life of a brotherhood so startling from the point of view of ordinary human selfishness that, even if it excited keen hostility, it must at any rate arrest attention as a bright light in a dark place; it certainly has not appeared as something which could purify society like salt, by its distinctive and emphatic savor, nor as something clearly in view and distinct in outline like "a city set on a hill."[13]

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[12] C.O.P.E.C. Commission, "The Social Function of the Church," pp. 186, 187.

[13] Charles Gore, "Christianity Applied to the Life of Men and Nations," p. 35.

# CHAPTER IV

## THE CHURCH AS TEACHER

### Questions

1. Effectiveness of the Sunday School.

   If you desired to find a young person of twenty-one who must be trustworthy, mindful of the rights of others and willing to take his share in common tasks, and had the opportunity of securing one who had been a member of your Sunday school for the last ten years, would you be justified in feeling that the fact of this membership established a strong presumption in favor of the applicant's having the qualities desired? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Religious Education for Social Conduct.

   In how far does your church provide instruction and guidance which enables children, young people and adults to see the moral issues involved in their daily conduct? How, if at all, does such instruction as is given help them to make Christian decisions in relation to these issues? Is education satisfied with conventional moral conduct, or does it aim at moral originality and sacrifice? Can the sense of God be developed through educational methods? If so, how? How are faith and hope and love promoted in the lives of people? Does educational method have anything to do with it? Has your church found the way, through any of its educational processes, to develop these Christian characteristics that are said to abide?

3. Appraisal of Educational Values.

   How useful are the following in helping people to discover the Christian way of life in the concrete situations

of daily experience? What, if anything, should be done in your church to make them more useful in this respect?

a. The service of worship, apart from the sermon.
b. The sermon.
c. The mid-week prayer service.
d. Discussion groups, such as forums, etc.
e. The Sunday school.
f. Bible study classes apart from the Sunday school.
g. The example, fellowship and counsel of the church members.

4. Doctrine and Life.

Does your minister preach or employ other methods to set forth the great Christian doctrines or the historic creeds? If he has done so, what have been the results? If he has not done so, would you like him to follow some such plan? Why? Why not?

a. What has doctrine to do with the Christian way of life? Does it make any difference what a man believes if his heart is all right? What is the relation of right belief to right action? What does one's belief in God have to do with the quality of one's living?
b. In how far shall the minister's authority be accepted on questions of doctrine and social ethics? What authority, if any, has the Church to teach or to make pronouncements, either with respect to right teaching (doctrine) or with respect to what is right in social issues and conflicts?
c. How did the doctrines of the Church come to be? What service have they rendered? What service do they render? What disservice do they render? What service might they render? What, if anything, is to be feared from teaching doctrine?
d. Is the Church's task as teacher to pass on a certain content of teaching, to impart a point of view, or to

help the individual to find his own point of view? Is it the Church's job to expound truth already in hand or to search for new truth in the field of religion? Can the Church fill both functions in due proportion?

5. Loyalty and Freedom.

When, in the education of children, and how, should they be encouraged to appraise and to criticize current social practices and institutions?

a. Should education ever seek to promote unquestioning loyalty? Why? When?

b. How can essential loyalties be developed without sacrificing necessary freedom?

**Comment**

If it be true, as Mr. H. G. Wells has said, that the present world situation is "a race between education and catastrophe," and if it be true, as the Copec Commission on Education declared, that "Right living depends on right thinking and feeling and that all right thinking means thinking rightly about God," then this part of the study is of surpassing importance. So many questions arise that the subject has been divided into two sections, and even so it will be impossible to cover all the questions fully. Where time is limited, here, as always, groups must choose.

The Sunday school has been for a hundred years the Church's foremost agency for formal religious education. It has been highly praised and sharply criticized. The first question is intended to lead to an appraisal of its effectiveness in influencing the social conduct of adolescents. Face fully the implications involved in this question and still more carefully the issues of Question 2. It may be that the religious education program and curriculum of the Church need radical revision if they are to serve more fully the Christian way of life.

In the study of the second group of questions help may be obtained from Professor George A. Coe's "A Social Theory of Religious Education." The spirit of this book is indicated in the following quotation from the Introduction:

*Love as an inclusive law for education has not been worked out in theory or tried in practice.* This is an astonishing thing to say, but it is strictly true. We have endeavored to include love within education as one item among many, but we have not taken it as the higher and inclusive conception by which to determine our aims and by which to test our methods. We have been accustomed to start the educative process outside of the act of loving, say in some dogma or religious rite, expecting somehow to get inside love at some later time. We have not thought of method as systematized love producing its like, that is, as the divine social order, already started on earth, and here and now giving children a place and an incentive to grow within itself. We have not conceived religious education as itself a part of the campaign for the social righteousness that the law of love requires, or as an actual initiation into the social relations that belong to the citizens of the kingdom. Rather we have assumed that the campaign for social righteousness is an affair of adults exclusively. We have even hesitated to bring it to church with us lest it should disturb reposeful contemplation of God. As if we could contemplate the Father without thinking about that upon which His heart is set, or as if He Himself could have peace of mind only by taking a vacation from the rest of the family![1]

Professor T. H. P. Sailer, of Teachers College, Columbia University, a well-known leader in religious education, passes the following general criticisms upon the Church from the educational standpoint:

The four most obvious criticisms of church work from the educational standpoint are as follows: (1) The *aims* of church work are either not clearly formulated or not held in their relative perspective in a way that adequately controls procedure. Much that we do is based on custom rather than

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[1] George A. Coe, "A Social Theory of Religious Education," Introduction, p. 7.

on intelligent purpose. Our expenditure of time and energy is far from being in direct proportion to the importance of the ends they pursue. (2) The *content* of the church activities which we promote has not been worked out on the basis of intelligent and consistent theory. The word curriculum seems ill-applied to experiences so unsystematic as those of the average church member. Good food is provided, but little dietary arrangement is evident. (3) The *methods* employed are in general too inefficient and sporadic. Pastors often make their own lack of educational training an excuse for turning important forms of Christian nurture over to volunteers with no training at all. (4) The inherited *machinery* of the church is in most cases poorly adapted to the achievement of educational aims. Even where large investment has been made in the plant the weekly schedule provides too little time for satisfactory results.

If urgent aims were always clearly before us we should select more vital activities; if church work were clearly more worth while we should be challenged to more effective methods; if our methods yielded more manifest results we should create new machinery for them.[2]

The Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook reports:

If there is any one point upon which chaplains agree it is in regard to the widespread ignorance as to the meaning of Christianity and church membership. . . . We might well hope that in a "Christian" country men generally, even those without any allegiance to Christ and His Church, would know what Christianity is. Chaplains say that they do not know. And they go beyond that and say that men nominally within the Church, men who have been to Christian schools, are in much the same condition. . . . The Church as a teacher has failed to instruct its own membership and present its Gospel to the men just outside its doors. . . . If we learn our lesson the result will be a vastly greater emphasis on our teaching function.[3]

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[2] From an unpublished manuscript.

[3] Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, "Religion Among American Men," pp. 14, 131.

Commenting on this statement the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook says:

When one looks back over our forty years of relatively barren teaching during which the "uniform" habit was fastened upon the churches of practically every community, and when one realizes that the churches believed for more than a generation that this was all that is necessary for the religious development of youth, he begins to understand why it is that the cross-section of young manhood brought together by the selective draft could be so pitifully ignorant and undeveloped in their religious life.[4]

Over against this, however, stands the testimony of Woodrow Wilson:

No study is more important than the study of the Bible and the truth which it teaches, and there is no more effective agency for such study than the Sunday school. The Sunday school lesson of today is the code of morals of tomorrow. Too much attention cannot be paid to the work which the Sunday school is doing.

Judge Fawcett, of the Brooklyn Supreme Court, says:

If we could keep the youth of America in Sunday school during the period of character formation, or at regular attendance upon religious worship, we could close the criminal courts and the jails. There would be no "raw material" to work on. And what is good for the youth would be equally salutary with adults. The sustained wholesome, moral atmosphere imparted through habitual attendance upon Sunday school and church will expel criminal impulses.[5]

But Judge Lindsey, of the Juvenile Court of Denver, has recently written:

The boys brought before me for theft come for the most part from the best day schools, the best Sunday schools, and many of them from boys' organizations too well and nationally known for me to need to name them here—agencies, one and all, supposed to make men of them.[6]

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[4] Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, "The Teaching Work of the Church," p. 148.

[5] Quoted in *Missions,* March, 1925, p. 150.

[6] Judge Ben B. Lindsey, *Physical Culture,* February, 1925, p. 124.

Discuss the third group of questions in the light of these criticisms to discover how far they apply to your church. The following further paragraph from "The Teaching Work of the Church" elaborates the problem with which this group of questions deals:

All of the Church's life and work, as a whole and in its various parts, may properly be tested and evaluated in the light of its teaching purpose. Does this or that item of its program contribute as it should to the realization of that aim? Is the preaching from its pulpit, for example, a disconnected string of oratorical efforts upon passing topics of the day or such as builds people up in the knowledge and love of God? Does its public worship bring the congregation into the presence of God, and open their minds and hearts to His love and truth? Does it give them a clearer vision of what the Kingdom of God means for our industrial and social and international life and send them out with a new determination to work for it? Do people come to this particular Church to learn, to serve, and to grow, or to be coddled in spirit and confirmed in their prejudices? Is its evangelism of the spasmodic, crowd-psychology type, or constant, sustained, and constructive? Does it merely "give to missions," or is it really interested and extending its fellowship, in intelligent and sympathetic fashion, to its brothers in foreign lands? Does its philanthropy involve paternalism or fellowship? Is its social service institutional only or personal?[1]

On the question of authority, the Report of the Commission of the British Student Christian Movement on "Students and the Church" urges discriminating judgment:

There are at least two senses in which the word can be used.

1. There is the "authority" of the Church as a whole, which it possesses as the recipient and mediator of a God-given Gospel of truth and salvation. The exercise of this authority consists in the interpretation and propagation of this gospel.
2. There is the "authority" of the accredited ministers of the Church. This would seem to be of two kinds:

[1] Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, "The Teaching Work of the Church," pp. 42, 43.

a. The authority committed to them by the Church to discharge for it certain special functions, one of these being teaching.

b. The authority which they themselves acquire by the due discharge of these functions, the process by which a teacher comes to be recognized as "an authority."

Without entering into a detailed consideration of these points, this much may perhaps be said: The two aspects of the authority of the minister mentioned above cannot really be dissociated. True authority as a teacher can be exercised only by one who has striven to equip himself for the task—who has *won* his authority. It is the failure to realize and act upon this which causes so much discontent among the thoughtful laity. They are prepared to recognize the minister's right to speak "with authority," if by that is meant "the authority of one duly qualified to pronounce an opinion." What they cannot tolerate is the assumption of an abstract and arbitrary authority by one whom they feel to be really unfitted to exercise it. The minister, even the theological student, is right in asserting his claim to speak with an authority greater than that of the layman. But his claim will be acknowledged only when it is known to be backed by real authority of thought and study. And further, and this point cannot be sufficiently emphasized, his authority as a teacher will be really effective and valuable only when it is exercised *not* as a means of suppressing the thinking of his pupils, but as a means of stimulating and developing it to a higher pitch.[8]

While it may be undesirable that the theological controversy which has been carried on so vigorously within the past year should be gone into, there are basic questions in the fourth group of questions that may not be avoided.

Professor John Dewey concludes an article on "Fundamentals" in *The New Republic* with this paragraph:

Looking at the present controversy from the outside, one may believe that it is thoroughly wholesome, humane and emancipating in effect, that it will make for tolerance and open-mindedness, greater sincerity and directness of experi-

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[8] Commission of the Student Christian Movement, "Students and the Church," pp. 49, 50.

ence and statement. And yet one may believe that it will not accomplish anything fundamental until the liberal protesting elements have cleared up their minds on at least just these two points: What is the relation of a specially organized community and institution like the church, whatever be the church, to religious experience? What is the place of belief in religion and by what methods is true belief achieved and tested?[9]

In the same issue of *The New Republic* Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, reviewing Bishop Lawrence's book, "Fifty Years," says:

It is evident that Bishop Lawrence was not driven nor controlled in his change of views primarily by a restless intellectual rebellion which insists on denying tomorrow what is believed today. Rather his change of views was due to his expanding spiritual life striking out for more air to breathe. It was not because he had grown less religious, but because he had become more religious, that he became more liberal. The expanding life of his spirit, smothered in old forms, burst through them like seed from a shell for the sake of fuller life and larger growth. If we had more liberalism of that variety we should have less trouble with it. After all, what really matters in religion is richness of spiritual life, and when old opinions are cast off and new ones come because an expansive soul is crying for more room, liberalism becomes more than liberalism—it becomes a valid spiritual movement with some promise in it of abiding influence.

To be sure, like all growing minds, Bishop Lawrence has trouble when his changing categories come into collision with the time-honored formulations of the classic creeds. . . . There is a rub that the creedal churches will have long puzzlement over before they are through. Shall they excommunicate men like Bishop Lawrence, who constitutes a strong tie binding the new generations to the Church of Christ? Shall they keep the old creeds as symbols, poetry, shibboleths, talismans, confessedly used without reference to their literal credibility? Shall they alter the creeds and try, as Edward Everett Hale suggested, to make a new one every year as

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[9] John Dewey, "Fundamentals," *The New Republic*, February 6, 1924, p. 276.

birds build their nests? Or shall they confess that creeds do not unite Christians but divide them and always have done so, and that the sooner the churches cease depending on authoritative formulations in theology and begin to depend for real unity on fellowship in a common loyalty and purpose, the sooner real unity will arrive?[10]

Mr. Walter Lippman says:

No creed possesses any final sanction. . . . It is more penetrating . . . to ask of a creed whether it served than whether it was "true." . . . What we need to know about the Christian epic is the effect it had on men—true or false, they have believed it for nineteen centuries. Where has it helped them, where hindered? What energies did it transmute? And what part of mankind did it neglect? Where did it begin to do violence to human nature?[11]

Professor William Adams Brown states the Roman Catholic and Protestant views of authority:

The Church of Rome makes this its first claim. It professes to be the one true mediator between a man and his God. The Church alone knows who and what God is and can point out the acceptable way of worshipping Him. . . . It is custodian of a supernatural revelation which is wholly unattainable apart from its aid.

Perfect and inerrant as it was in all its parts, the Bible remained a sealed book, unless its meaning was opened to the reader by the Spirit. The authority of Protestantism is not the Bible alone, but the Spirit of God bearing witness to the heart and conscience of the believer that this book is God's word to him. . . . Each man must read the Bible for himself and make his own independent decisions on the basis of what he reads. Each must pray his own prayer and expect his own answer. With each God deals at first hand. No one's experience can take the place of his neighbor's.[12]

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[10] Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The New Republic*, February 6, 1924, p. 290.

[11] Walter Lippman, "Preface to Politics," p. 225.

[12] William Adams Brown, "Imperialistic Religion and the Religion of Democracy," pp. 66, 67; 122, 123.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CHURCH AS TEACHER *(continued)*

**Questions**

1. THE PULPIT AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

   Should the minister discuss in his sermons the moral issues involved in industrial, social, racial or international questons?

   a. If so, should he deal only with "general principles"?

   b. Can he be expected to know enough to preach on the application of Christian principles to large contemporary issues? Why do you answer as you do?

   c. If he cannot, how is that knowledge to be made available for those of his people who must have some part, through the ballot and in other ways, in settlement of these issues?

   d. Criticize or appraise the average sermon from the standpoint of educational efficiency.

2. THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION.

   Can the Church acquire sufficient technical and detailed knowledge to enable it to have a significant part in social reconstruction or must it simply develop good-will and let some other agency, or agencies, provide the social facts necessary to the application of the good-will to life? If so, who should discover the facts? How can this be done? How far is the Church responsible for seeing that the great needs of the world demanding sacrifice are met? What is the responsibility of the Church for providing vocational guidance in general? For providing guidance with respect to the so-called Christian vocations?

3. The Study of Social Questions.

What provision is your church or your denomination making for the study of recreation and health questions, race relations, industrial conditions and international problems in the light of the spirit and teaching of Jesus? What provision should it make? If you believe that your church should make more provision for the study of these questions, what steps can you take to bring this about? (See also Chapter IX on this whole subject.)

4. Missionary Education.

Does the program of missionary education available for your church through your denominational societies meet the need of the church members for an understanding knowledge of the missionary enterprise in its world-wide outreach? What attitude toward the peoples of other nations and races seems to result from mission study? Is it such an attitude as will make for peace on earth and good-will among men? For a democratic spirit or a patronizing attitude on the part of those who share in such education? Do ordinary missionary exercises have sufficient force to secure volunteers for home or foreign service? Are these exercises presented in such a way as to render any action involving sacrifice likely on the part of participants or hearers?

5. Education of Ministers.

In view of the conclusions reached in this discussion, in how far do the ministers you know seem to you to have the educational training necessary for helpful guidance in the solution of those social problems (racial, industrial, political) which confront the Church and society? Just what kind of training would you as a church member like the ministers now in preparation to have?

**Comment**

On the vital question of ministerial education with which this section begins there is now available the results of a comprehensive study of 161 theological schools in the United States and Canada by a committee of which Bishop Charles H. Brent was chairman and Dr. Robert L. Kelly was secretary. Under problems of theological education this report says:

The expansion of the spirit of democracy is a startling phenomenon which the typical seminary has not taken into account. Rare seminaries are beginning to appreciate the relation of the churches to the problems of society.

Shall the seminaries be content with the popular judgment that the churches which they serve are committed to the traditional views of the "employer class," or at best are but onlookers in the struggle of men for social justice and human understanding? Is there a practical, present-day exposition of what men should render to Cæsar as well as to their fellow men, with which the student-ministers should be familiar? Should the churches be allies of the government in its efforts at law enforcement and all forms of social amelioration? Shall the seminary develop citizens of the world? What constitutes the Kingdom of Heaven? Is it made up of elements entirely "other-worldly" in character?

Some thousands of the captains of industry, under the leadership of outstanding Christian laymen, have undertaken to outline the future commercial policies of the United States. They appeal for the "square deal," for righteousness, for honesty, for the spirit of service in business.

In the same manner the bankers, the newspaper editors, the theatrical producers, the diplomats, as well as the labor unions, the socialists and the college students are formulating statements intended for what they believe to be ethical, if not religious, guidance.

Democracy may well become, indeed is becoming, a vehicle at the command of those who would extend the Gospel of Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth.

If what Mr. Bryce said is true, that "history testifies that free governments have prospered only among religious peoples," the seminary has an inescapable obligation to train

men who are to occupy places of commanding influence in the achievement among men of the New Democracy.[1]

Confessedly the second and third groups of questions raise grave problems for ministers and churches:

The real strength of Christianity is in what it affirms and achieves; and the function of the Church is not police duty in the furtherance of a set of prohibitions, but prophetic leadership into the domain of ideals that warm and inspire the soul and prompt men first to love and then to do the right.[2]

Miss Vida Scudder remarks:

If such matters have nothing to do with the Church, then the Church has nothing to do with righteousness. The hour has come for Christian thought to give definite sanction to the new social ethic that has been developing for the last half century. The check by common will on private greed, the care for public health, the protection of childhood and manhood, the securing of fair leisure from the monotonies of modern labor, form a program hardly to be called radical any longer. It is accredited by all the progressive forces of the community; it forms the background of respectable modern thinking.[3]

The same author says:

In this new function of social guidance on which the Church is seemingly entering, she needs to practice very delicate discrimination. To get up a party whch shall fight to gain the endorsement of the Church for this measure or that program is an attractive short-cut to social Christianity, but it is a short-cut that leads to By-Ends' Meadows and will end by plunging the Church into the morass of politics. . . .

[The Church's] work is not to announce new economic theories, it is only incidentally to approve specific programs. It is to insist that her children sift theories uncompromisingly in the light of Christian idealism; it is above all to offer the incentive which shall draw men to try the Great Adventure of Christian living in terms of the new age.[4]

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[1] Robert L. Kelly, "Theological Education in America," pp. 230, 231.

[2] Quoted by Raymond Calkins, "The Christian Church and the Modern World," p. 76.

[3] Vida D. Scudder, "The Church and the Hour," p. 53.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 30.

Dr. Raymond Calkins says:

The Church will imitate the method of Jesus Himself. The Gospels contain little or no discussion of the details of the social problems of the day. Rather one discovers in them certain inclusive spiritual principles applicable to the social problems of His time and of all time. The Church, therefore, will not engage in economic debates or discuss controversial aspects of the social question. Instead, its message will proceed from the circumference straight to the center. It will consist in a thorough interpretation of the reach and meaning of the spiritual principles of Jesus, and it will insist upon an equally trenchant application of them. . . .

Neither is it meant that the Church will content itself with mere generalizations, and never directly attack existing social evils. It will denounce specific evils in our modern world as pointedly as the Old Testament prophets condemned the sins of Israel. Yet by holding in the main to the method of Jesus in His approach to the social problem, the teaching of the Church will be delivered alike from the reproach that its spiritual note has disappeared, and its pulpit has become a secular rostrum for the discussion of "current events," and, also, from the reproach that it is trying to discuss questions about which it is not really informed. Without doubt congregations do suffer from ill-considered and often really ignorant discussions from the pulpit of social questions. People are neither quickened nor awakened by such ranting.[5]

Mr. Walter Lippman has this to say:

There are many ways of serving everyday needs—turning churches into social reform organs and political rostra is, it seems to me, an obvious but shallow way of performing that service. When churches cease to paint the background of our lives, to nourish a Weltanschaung, strengthen men's ultimate purposes and reaffirm the deepest values of life, then the churches have failed to meet the need for which they exist. That "hinterland" affects daily life, and the church which cannot get a leverage on it by any other method than entering into immediate political controversy is simply a

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[5] Raymond Calkins, "The Christian Church in the Modern World," pp. 77, 80, 81.

church that is dead. It may be an admirable instrument of reform, but it has ceased to be a church.[6]

On the question of acquiring the facts necessary to intelligent social action by the churches consider the proposal of Dr. Henry Hodgkin:

But it is more than enthusiasm, even for suffering and death, that the Church needs. She needs knowledge. One of the first things to be planned by a Church that took her task seriously would be a research department. She would devote her best brains and large resources not to training men so that they could deliver moving sermons or write able treatises on theology alone, but to close examination into the actual facts of our contemporary life, the problems that need to be solved in our big cities, in industry, in agriculture, in international life, and so forth. Into such a research department would be turned the actual experience of church members the world over who were trying to face their problems in the Christian spirit; they would bring their difficulties and successes; they would show why business is not being conducted according to the Golden Rule and what are the real seeds of war. From such a research department would flow papers and books that would help towards clear thinking; suggestions for action by local congregations or groups of congregations; advice to individuals and information about those who were facing similar problems; plans for intervisitation from country to country, school to school, town to town. What object of research can be more worthy of effort than research into the problem of making this earth a place where God's will is done as in heaven, and into the many noble efforts being made towards this end? Such a department spread in various countries would command the support of the very best brains the Churches in all lands could produce. If it were taken seriously it would enlist many students who are burning with a desire to harness their energies to a worthy task. It should be linked with the world-wide missionary movement already referred to, and it should be producing missionaries of the new social order, for many who began with research would wish to go on into active service, coming

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[6] Walter Lippman, "Preface to Politics," pp. 181, 182.

back, perhaps, with richer experience to give further years to the work of investigation.[7]

The Copec Report on the Social Function of the Church contains this judgment:

Much of the success of the work here recommended must depend upon the activity of a competent research department. We would not, of course, propose to duplicate research work that is already being done. It would be the first aim of any united Christian research department to put itself in touch with all the research work that is being done already and to arrange terms which would enable it to utilize all existing work. But it is imperative that the leaders and guides of Christian thought should have always accessible on subjects of moment full and reliable knowledge of social facts and of the latest results of sociological thinking. There is also a distinctive sphere for a research department of the Churches. The subject matter here would not be the social need and agency which are the province of the scientist and the social reformer; it would rather be the ideas and inspirations, the proposals and experiments to which Christian people are being constantly led by their Christian faith, but which remain unknown to their fellow Christians, and, because unknown and therefore unrevised in the light of wider Christian experience, are often comparatively unfruitful.[8]

American Churches have such an agency in The Federal Council's Department of Research and Education which issues a weekly *Information Service,* (105 East 22nd Street, New York City).

Dr. Paul Douglass argues as follows:

Just how important is it that the Church should make a point of contact with labor both by investigation and by service? How much of an issue is at stake in its desire to know about social questions and its effort to let the light of discussion in upon economic struggle? Good people there are who feel it highly improper for the Church to leave its recognized spiritual field to deal with these vexed issues of the working

[7] Henry T. Hodgkin, "The Christian Revolution," p. 209, 210.

[8] C. O. P. E. C. Commission Report, "The Social Function of the Church, pp. 157, 158.

world. Why cannot such matters simply be dropped? To be concerned with them is to subject the Church to the strain of criticism and to the very definite risk of error. People do not like it when the Church criticizes their economic methods; while on the other hand, the Church is sometimes mistaken and has to take back its words. Is it not better, then, for the Church simply to stay out of the economics field?

In order to justify the Church in taking these risks, let us see quite clearly the function which it performs in American society when, for example, it reports on the steel strike. It acts as the brain and heart of democracy. It does the most necessary service possible. It puts into effect the only known alternative to revolution. And no agency is in so good a position to do this and still to be trusted by both contending parties.[9]

Mr. William H. Barr, President of the National Founders Association, in an address on "The Church and Industrial Problems," delivered to the Church Congress of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Boston, May 1, 1924, protests against the support given by eminent churchmen to what is vaguely described as "the demand for a new Christian social order" in which they disregard what he believes to be economic facts and says:

There is prevalent in the minds of many outside of industry the vague idea that the term "brotherhood of man" means that the weaker members of society should be subsidized by the strong and as a result receive more than they earn. The fact remains, however, that the economics of the Almighty are more sound than the theoretical economics of many sentimental reformers, for the laws of economics are as much God's law as are the Ten Commandments, and he who teaches unsound economic law is as misleading as he who teaches wrong spiritual law. The analysis and solution of economics have been studied seriously for a long time by men as well fitted to their task as is the minister to become a specialist in the development of spiritual character. . . . I venture therefore to urge upon your great body that you frankly

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[9] Harlan Paul Douglass, "From Survey to Service," pp. 169, 170.

undertake to provide spiritual teaching as an aid to economic leadership as your major contribution to the betterment of employment relations. I think our Church risks its badly needed spiritual influence by mingling with it the support of theoretical or even possibly sound political and social panaceas.[10]

If it be agreed in connection with the last group of questions that something ought to be done, the following considerations from "The Teaching Work of The Church" merit attention:

The pulpit, allowing no opportunity for the give-and-take of discussion, has serious limitations as an agency for interpreting the meaning of Christianity for such mooted questions as face us in our industrial, social, and international life. The fundamental Christian principles must, of course, be interpreted from the pulpit but their more detailed application to concrete problems requires such an opportunity as the adult class affords for discussion with those who are having practical experience with these problems in their daily life.

Such a class may sometimes profitably adopt a "seminar method" and make first-hand inquiries about the pressing problems of the community in which they live—juvenile delinquency, the public dance hall, the influence of the motion-picture theater, the housing situation, industrial conditions. Or a series of addresses by men who are actively engaged in work for social welfare, followed by opportunity for questions and discussion, may bring the group face to face with questions of their community life and lead to new insights into social duty.

An enlargement of the influence of the adult class in dealing with social questions in the light of Christianity may be found in the open forum, now beginning to find a place in the program of the Church. More than the pulpit, even more than the adult class, it affords an opportunity for hearing the various sides of a question, and of securing the alert participation of a large body of people.[11]

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[10] "Honest Liberty in the Church," pp. 327, 331.

[11] Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, "The Teaching Work of the Church," pp. 166, 167.

# CHAPTER VI

## CHURCH DISCIPLINE

### Questions

1. Guidance in Conduct.

   Should a church undertake definitely to direct the social conduct of its members?

   a. If it should do so in some circumstances and not in others, how shall it know when to act?

   b. Have communities a right to expect that the churches will demand or will induce in their members a higher ethical standard than that which generally prevails? For example, with reference to causes regarded as sufficient justification for divorce, and conditions under which remarriage after divorce may be approved.

   c. Have communities the right to expect that the churches will demand or induce a concern on the part of their members for the bettering of social conditions and the improvement of business practices?

   d. Do the members of the church when in grave perplexity as to what would be the Christian thing to do in a given situation (for example, in industrial organization, in a business deal, a lockout, a strike, or in time of war) naturally turn to the church for guidance as to the Christian standards involved? Give reasons. Should they do so? Why?

2. Church Opinion and Social Conduct.

   In what ways, if at all, can the Church develop and express a corporate public opinion that will be a significant and helpful factor in the social conduct of its members?

3. Enforcing Christian Standards.

What shall determine church action toward members who are believed to have violated the ethical demands of the Christian religion?

a. Should a church exclude from its fellowship members who are guilty of drunkenness, adultery, lying? If so, under what circumstances and by what authority? If not, what, if anything, should it do with respect to flagrant violations of the Christian code?

b. What, if anything, is to be done in case of members who engage in such things as encouraging war, watering stock, sabotage or exploiting workers?

c. Should a church deal only with positive breaches of conduct or shall it deal also with negative unrighteousness, such as idleness, selfishness, etc.?

d. Should a church take note of the luxuries or amusements of its members?

e. What is the general attitude of people today toward the assertion of the right of discipline on the part of a church? Do you share in this attitude? Why?

f. What bearing do your answers have on the purpose and present possibility of discipline? On the nature and purpose of the Church, and on its present place in society?

g. Would or would not close cooperation in matters of discipline between Protestant Churches be of value in developing right social attitudes on the part of church members in general?

**Comment**

It is commonly declared that church discipline has become in our time "a lost art." It was at one time proposed to omit this section from our study because it was not thought practical. It was retained because it is believed that we ought to

find out whether or not church discipline should be practiced, and if not, to consider just how the whole question may be disposed of.

As in many other places in this study exact definition is needed. Discipline is commonly thought of as a process tending towards excommunication. It should be remembered that discipline and discipling are essentially the same thing. If discipline be thought of as looking mainly toward direction and guidance and reclamation, with excommunication as the last resort in certain cases, then the subject has a most intimate relation to the general inquiry.

Moreover, a church's policy as to discipline involves its theory of what the church is: a group of believers committed to a way of life differing from that of the world at large and held together by rather definite rules or ideals or beliefs or practices, departure from which involves separation from the group, or an inclusive body of professed believers which includes both bad and good that must be allowed like the wheat and the tares to grow together until the harvest.

Dr. Henry Hodgkin sets forth a point of view that may serve as a starting point for the discussion of the first group of questions (particularly 1-d):

It is commonly asumed that one of the great objects to be considered in this connection is the preservation of the purity of the Church. We can only include those who are admitted by a certain rite which is regarded by some as having, in itself, a very deep meaning and potency; all must be morally up to standard and theologically orthodox; the Church must take proper precautions to exclude from her fellowship those who fail in these respects; otherwise her witness will be weakened and she will lose her influence in the world.

It may be doubted whether this whole way of thinking is not dangerous and whether it really corresponds to the primitive conception of the Church. In any case it is open to grave abuse. It tends to a narrow exclusiveness, a judging spirit, a certain priggishness and self-righteousness and a sense on the part of those outside the Church that they can have no

lot or part in her life and activities. Let us be perfectly clear at the outset that with every possible precaution the Church cannot be wholly "pure" in this sense, that at the best any outward organization will be only a rough approximation to the real spiritual family, both because some of its members will not have or will lose the life, and because some who have the life will never find their way into the organization. This means that over-emphasis on the view just stated leads to a concentration of effort on what we can never hope to attain.

But it also means that effort is turned into a direction by which even that end cannot be approached. For these outward tests of purity manifestly fail. Very often they frighten away the difficult but sincere spirit, and bring in the shallow or even the insincere. Church history does not seem to show any conspicuous success along these lines, and it shows a number of very conspicuous failures. For the Church herself has martyred and persecuted and excluded as heretics some of her finest children, and given places of high honor to schemers and worse.

Would it not be possible to use the aim of the Church as the rallying point in place of any credal statement? If the Church exists primarily to bring in the Kingdom of God, why not let her membership be simply those who are engaged in this task? Has any person not so employed any more claim to belong to the fellowship than a civilian to belong to an army in action? The simile suggests, of course, the immense range of activities that may be included as contributing to the main purpose. Just as those engaged in food supply, in coal-mining, in transport and in a hundred other occupations, besides the actual makers of munitions and members of the subsidiary services, are essential to the success of the army in the field, so, in the supreme purpose of the Church, there is need of many others besides the men engaged in direct propaganda.[1]

That discipline is always at least assumed wherever there is a Church is urged by Professor William Adams Brown:

Every religion which has a Church assumes at least in theory some responsibility for the conduct of its adherents. There are some things which no Church can tolerate, such as the profanation of its temples, or the neglect of its ceremonies.

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[1] Henry T. Hodgkin, "The Christian Revolution," pp. 191, 192.

In those religions which think of the Deity as a moral being, the source of public law and the guardian of public morals, the Church is concerned with the daily lives of its worshippers, and may seek to control these by church court or confessional. In mystical religions, where attention is concentrated upon the relation between the individual soul and God, the discipline may be self-inflicted, and the assistance of the Church be given through the code of rules which it puts into the hands of the devotee, in his search for God.[2]

The acute problems of churches in industrial districts in time of a strike is set forth by Dr. Worth M. Tippy. After citing numerous examples of conflict in connection with the Railroad Shopmen's Strike in 1923 he reports the conclusions reached in a conference of pastors who had the facts before them. How far would you approve these conclusions as a statement of the duty of pastors and churches in attempting to give guidance in conduct in such emergencies?

It was the consensus of opinion in the discussion that the church must have a first concern for the rights of the workers and the welfare of their families, and that pastors of congregations made up of strikers should espouse their cause so far as they can conscientiously do so, but that they should keep the mind of Christ themselves and exert their influence for Christian methods in the conduct of a strike; . . . that the use of Christian methods strengthened rather than weakened the conduct of a strike; . . . that pastors should not become partisans of hatred, vituperation and violence; . . . that pastors should insist upon their right and duty to minister to all their people, and that they should not allow men or families to be driven from the churches; . . . where the right is clearly with the men, it was agreed that it is wrong for men to accept replacement positions, and that it is legitimate for the pastor to say as much; also to urge upon non-union workers the unfairness of accepting the benefits of labor organization without helping to pay the costs. The necessity of discovering a method of settling such disputes without industrial warfare aroused the deepest interest. . . .

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[2] William Adams Brown, "Imperialistic Religion and the Religion of Democracy," pp. 56, 57.

To find a workable and Christian method of cooperation between employer and employee, and to promote a larger industrial cooperation which shall include the state and the spiritual forces of the nation, as well as employer and employee, seem to me to be the project to which the church should devote itself. The fighting will not and cannot stop until this is done. The fighting spirit, while once necessary, has become the greatest menace of civilization. A better, a moral and scientific method of righting wrongs and securing progress is being developed. It is the method of research and cooperation. If the church has any distinctive mission in industry, one phase of it is to persuade men to use scientific methods and to work together for social progress. There will be plenty of others to inflame class hatreds and lead the fighting.[3]

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[3] Worth M. Tippy, "What a Strike Means to a Church," *The Christian Century*, July 31, 1924, p. 980.

# CHAPTER VII

## THE BUSINESS PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH

### Questions

1. Financing the Church.

   a. For local expenses. Is the raising of money for the parish budget a matter that in itself tends to contribute to the life of the spirit? Are methods used or is pressure applied that tends to discredit the church as a spiritual fellowship? What is the effect of raising money by bazaars and other such methods where buying and giving are mingled? What is the basis of appeal for the maintenance of church work in a community? If the community is over-churched, what effect does this have on the financial methods of each church concerned?

   b. For general church benevolences. What real claim has a denomination on its local churches for hearty participation in church-wide benevolent enterprises? What contribution to the larger spiritual life of the local church may be expected from such participation? In what measure should the church-wide denominational agencies be responsible to and be guided by local church sentiment and conviction in the methods of raising and in the use of funds? Can or cannot a local church become sufficiently informed on great benevolent activities really to give trustworthy guidance to the denominational leaders? If so, what does this argue as to the educational program of the Church? If not, how can the effective giving of the local church be kept up, year after year, for objectives which the local church has little or no voice in choosing, and no

adequate basis for evaluating the results attained? In other words, how can the democratic spirit in church life reach out into and become effective in the larger enterprises of the Church?

2. Church Expenditures.

What is required by Christian ethics in respect to methods of use of church funds? Should the standards be different than those prevalent in commonly accepted business practice? Why? Why not? In what respects, if any, are the churches following a different code than that of business? Will this church code, written or unwritten, stand scrutiny?

3. The Example of the Church.

Do the churches as you know them in their business practices as employer, landlord, creditor or debtor set Christian standards for related community practices in business and industry?

4. Desirable Changes.

What changes, if any, seem to you to be required in the business practices of your church in relation to the foregoing questions of this section?

**Comment**

The questions submitted in connection with this section are few but they will in most groups be found to be sufficiently "live" to occupy all the time available. It might be well to begin with a review and appraisal of the methods of raising money that are being employed by the local church and its organizations. Follow this with a similar study of the financial methods of denominational and other organizations that are appealing to the local churches. If in any respect the appeals seem to have an unfavorable influence, search carefully for the causes whether these be in the methods employed, in

the resistance of the ungenerous individual, or in lack of challenging appeal in the causes presented.

This study ought to open up for discussion the whole question of stewardship so largely emphasized today by denominational organizations. The group should define stewardship for itself, considering what it means toward God and one's fellow men, and asking whether or not partnership is a better term to describe the ideal relationship.

The question of tithing and the arguments used to promote it should be fully canvassed. From a widely circulated pamphlet, "What We Owe and Why We Owe It," by "A Layman," the following quotation is taken:

It would seem incredible that God would put into any human soul, enlightened or unenlightened, a distinct sense of duty and obligation and then give no standard or measure by which it may be known when the duty is performed. The real question resolves itself down to this: Is the Tithe, the tenth of income, a moral institution based on the needs of human nature, defined by a moral law, which is still binding, just as the law of the Sabbath, the seventh of time, is still binding, or was it a mere ritual law, beginning and ending with the Mosaic economy?[1]

On the other hand, Dr. Rauschenbusch says:

We all understand that a man receiving $500 a year cannot pay as much to religious institutions as a man receiving $5,000, but the universal impression seems to be that he can fairly be expected to contribute the same proportion of his income. The Old Testament law of tithing is very generally recommended as the ideal to be followed by all, on the supposition that ten per cent of an income of $500 is the same proportion as ten per cent of an income of $5,000. This commercial method of calculation leaves some fundamental facts of human nature out of account and has inflicted a grave wrong on the poorer portion of our churches. . . .

If, then, any average wage-earner in the churches has actually given a tenth of his income, he deserves profound respect. It is heroic giving for him. And if we have allowed

[1] A Layman, "What We Owe and Why We Owe It."

the impression to prevail that the giving of one-tenth by all was equal giving for all, we have unwittingly inflicted a grievous injustice on the poorer church members.

In every church working among the poorer classes there are a number who contribute nothing or are dependents of the church instead of supporters. Every season of economic distress depresses additional families below this line. But some self-respecting people may choose a different line of action. If their church membership involves too heavy a tax, they drop away. Other causes and motives may work in the same direction, but the pressure exerted by the systematized giving of the modern church, and the insistence on this virtue in pulpit teaching, must alienate some. They simply cannot afford church life. The fraternal societies, which offer insurance and mutual help in sickness and death, have increased immensely among the wage-earners, while the Church confessedly has lost ground among them. Is this due merely to religious indifference and unbelief, or to poverty coupled with self-respect?[2]

Dr. Kresge discusses a problem which every church needs to consider in developing its financial policy:

The great majority of erasures from our list of membership, so far as I have been able to discover, are for non-payment of dues. Here is our greatest leakage. In the majority of these cases there is, no doubt, a moral reason back of the financial delinquency. Most of these people could pay their church dues if they cared to do so. But, on the other hand, there are many good and honest people who will not join the church, and others who have left the church, because they need every cent of their meager income for the daily necessities of life. Reliable investigations of the distribution of income have surprised us with the revelation that fully one-fourth of all the families of the United States, during the decade or two before the war, were living on less than $600 a year. Every large community in rich America has many families—good, honest families—who cannot afford to pay the dues and the extra benevolence which the church requires of her members without denying themselves some of the vital

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[2] Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianity and the Social Crisis," pp. 292-294.

necessities. And I refuse to cast the first stone at the man who uses the tithe of a $600 or $700 income to buy an extra bottle of milk for his babies or a new hat for his wife, rather than give it to the church.[3]

The question of raising money has become an acute one in one large Board because of the charge by a member of its staff that it was raising its money on the basis of one kind of appeal and spending funds raised on other phases of its work which might not be very heartily approved by the giving constituency:

Protestant churches of the major denominations are raising their home mission money for one purpose and spending a goodly proportion of it for another. They are raising it on the appeal of the spiritual and social needs of the immigrants and the Southern mountaineers, the Negroes and the Mexicans, the Alaskans and the Indians, of other needy and neglected peoples. They are spending a proportion of that money in establishing or maintaining denominational churches in rural communities, already over-churched. The economic waste and the social sin of competing denominations in small towns and cities have been denounced for decades by the churches themselves. Yet they are feeding that denominational competition with home mission aid today. And that aid is raised for another purpose.[4]

Mr. Eastman is careful to state that he knows of no misuse of designated funds. Be sure that the issue is clear:

Let there be no misunderstanding here. If any layman sends to a board of home missions of any of the major denominations a contribution specifically designating in writing that it shall be used only for a certain mission or a specific field, his instructions will be honored or the money returned. To the best of my knowledge and belief all denominational boards endeavor to carry out sacredly the wishes of their contributors, when the contributors put in writing their specific requests.

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[3] Elijah E. Kresge, "The Church and the Ever-coming Kingdom of God," pp. 160, 161.

[4] Fred Eastman, "What the Left Hand Doeth," *Survey Graphic*, June, 1924, p. 271.

And much, if not all, of the contributions to the women's boards are in this designated class. But the greater bulk of home mission money comes not from the women's organizations, but from the churches through their regular benevolence budgets and is undesignated. Why should not this undesignated money be as sacredly guarded as the other? It is just as much the product of sacrifice. Gifts contributed in response to the promotional appeal of home missions, whether that appeal comes through a pastor or a board secretary, ought not to have to be specifically labelled in order to have the church spend them along the lines of that appeal.[5]

The Rev. Dr. A. W. Anthony, former secretary of the Home Missions Council, makes a strong reply in *The Survey* for July 15, 1924 (p. 475), but not to the satisfaction of Mr. Eastman, whose short rebuttal is appended to Dr. Anthony's article. The article quoted from above and Dr. Anthony's reply should both be read for the full statement of the problem.

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 278.

# CHAPTER VIII

## CHURCH GROWTH

### Questions

1. Evangelistic Method.

   What motives should actuate the church in seeking to add to its membership? Are these the motives that are actually at work? If not, how explain the motives that are functioning? What has the church to offer as inducements to membership? Why are not these inducements effective with a larger number of people? What methods does your church employ to secure its recruits? In what ways would you like to see these methods changed? What are the various reasons why more or less earnest types of people are uninterested in church attendance and activities?

2. The New Member.

   In what ways, if any, is it expected in your community that one who has joined the church will live differently from another who has not? In what ways is church membership explained to candidates? What tests are put to them? What is actually required in becoming a member so far as a way of life is concerned? How far is the test based on the acceptance of certain convictions and the practice of certain "religious habits"? To what extent does it deal with purposes and motives? What should be the minimum requirements? How many of the following would you insist upon?

   a. Upon acceptance of historic creedal statements?

   b. Upon a promised loyalty to the organization?

c. Upon a declared purpose to support the organization financially?

d. Upon a declared purpose to participate in the various activities and enterprises of the church?

e. Upon participation in some formal initiation into church fellowship?

f. Upon a declared purpose to inquire into Christian ideals for living, and so far as may be, when these are discovered, to seek to live thereby?

g. Upon a declaration of faith?

3. Church Work in Alien Communities.

Do non-church members in your community object to Protestant churches carrying on either evangelistic or community service activities in neighborhoods prevailingly Roman Catholic or Jewish? Is there any objection on similar grounds to the foreign mission enterprise? What validity is there, if any, in such objections?

4. Church Growth and World Transformation.

Is your church primarily interested in self-maintenance and self-development, or does it exist to create a new world society? What is the relation between these two ideals? How may the Church defend itself against the charge of selfishness and propagandism in its extension work? Could a church recruit people for membership in the Kingdom of God and yet be indifferent as to additions to its own membership? Could the Church in its foreign mission work be indifferent to increase of formal church membership? Why? Why not?

5. Possible Changes.

What changes, if any, in receiving and instructing its members would have to take place in your own church if membership is to have its richest meaning? If you think

that there should be changes, what, if anything, would be likely to happen if such changes were made? Could these changes be brought about? If not, why not? If so, how?

**Comment**

No section of our inquiry calls for more careful unbiased study than this one. We need to revaluate our evangelism in the light of the Christian way of life. Dr. Alva W. Taylor has said some things in a leaflet on "Social Evangelism" that will give any group help in starting a discussion of the first group of questions. He begins thus:

A church held a great meeting.
It won many; many it did not win.
It did an unheard-of thing; it investigated why.
The Gospel was the power unto salvation, they said.
Yet that power had failed to reach many.
It had been powerfully preached and winsomely sung.
Evidently something was needed besides preaching.
They had talked with and prayed for many in vain.
Evidently something besides personal work was needed.
They found few men past thirty-five had been won.
They concluded the man must be saved while a boy in the Sunday school.
But they found few boys past fifteen in the Sunday school.
And they found many boys in the town.
They found another town getting them with the Boy Scouts.
And another with the Junior Y. M. C. A.
And another with organized baseball.
And others in other ways that the boys liked.
And they said we will get them too—and they did.
All it needed was a man and a plan.
So they added a *social service* to their evangelism.

Dr. Taylor concludes thus:

Within a year he found many revival meeting converts backsliding.
The revivalist said it was the fault of pastoral oversight.
Some of the church officers believed him.
The pastor asked them to come with him and investigate.
They found some had emotional natures; the soil was thin.
They found some had no foundation in religious education.

They found worldliness could not be cured in a three weeks' appeal.
They found some in homes where no one but a saint could be a Christian.
Some told them they earnestly tried, but life was too hard.
Others wept and asked how religion could live in their evil neighborhood.
Some went back to the saloon and pool-hall and answered with silence.
The pastor was cleared by the officers.
But he convicted himself for not preaching a social message.
He asked himself why pastors had not united to clean up the community.
He said to himself, "I have found a new predestination."
It was a foredooming and foredamning of people by the place they were born in and lived in.
So he led his church to forget itself in service of its community.
They turned from sectarianism to religion of the "pure and undefiled" type.
They found some church machinery that took power and brought no grist.
They found some new inventions and attached them to the Gospel's power.
They added *social salvation* to personal salvation.
And that church grew without pride, but the Kingdom grew more.

Professor Coe states a point of view on evangelistic method that is worthy of consideration:

The most fundamental thing in education is its constant reconstruction of purposes. Christian education, when it is really social, is through and through an incoming of the higher life, a renewing of the mind, a laying aside of lower selves. If, then, one of our pupils has already formed such perverse purposes that his present need is conversion, we are still to proceed as educators. We should never turn an adolescent over to uneducational evangelism.

Evangelism is uneducational to the extent that it is characterized by any of these things: Separating the act of surrender to God from devotion to men; inducing a decision so general or so indeterminate in its content as to separate it

from the specific decisions involved in the previous and the subsequent education of the youth; awakening aspiration without providing immediate outlet for it in social living; separating conversion from habit formation on the one side and from intelligent analysis on the other; occasionalism, or postponing specific dealing with the adolescent's purposes to a particular occasion, and then crowding this occasion with appeals so that mental assimilation is impossible; finally, such use of suggestion and of emotional incitement as prevents rather than promotes the self-controlled organization of purposes.[1]

What church membership actually means is thus expressed by Dr. Josiah Strong:

Failing to apprehend the social laws of Jesus, the Church has had no practical test of unselfish character, and has therefore admitted to membership great numbers who give no evidence of being citizens of the Kingdom. Does the average church member aim at the largest possible service to humanity? Is it that for which he is longing and planning and sacrificing?

So far as we can see, the less worthy part of the church membership (and it is a very large part) are living precisely as most respectable people outside the church live, namely, to please themselves—make money, or have a good time, or do whatever best suits their tastes, inclinations, or ambitions.

The better portion of the membership is more or less seriously and intermittently seeking their own personal salvation.

The best part are truly unselfish; they are living to do good in the world, and are the salt of the earth and of society. In most cases, however, they are only imperfectly instructed in the Christianity of Christ, and, therefore, fail to realize that measure of largeness, effectiveness and joy of life here and now, of which they are capable. The misplaced emphasis on life hereafter leads to an undervaluation of life here. To reach heaven at last has been made the great desideratum. As a natural result the church has been much more anxious to get men into heaven than to get heaven into men.[2]

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[1] George A. Coe, "A Social Theory of Religious Education, pp. 182, 183.

[2] Josiah Strong, "The New World-Religion," pp. 427, 428.

The Roman Catholic attitude toward the propagation of other religious views in a Roman Catholic country is stated by the Rev. Dr. John A. Ryan:

Quite distinct from the performance of false religious worship and preaching by the members of the erring sect, is the propagation of the false doctrine among Catholics. This could become a source of injury, a positive menace, to the religious welfare of true believers. Against such an evil they have a right of protection by the Catholic State. On the one hand this propaganda is harmful to the citizens and contrary to public welfare; one the other hand it is not among the natural rights of the propagandists. Rights are merely means to rational ends. Since no rational end is promoted by the dissemination of false doctrine, there exists no right to indulge in this practice. The fact that the individual may in good faith think that his false religion is true gives no more right to propagate it than the sincerity of the alien anarchist entitles him to advocate his abominable political theories in the United States, or than the perverted ethical notions of the dealer in obscene literature confer upon him a right to corrupt the morals of the community. No State could endure on the basis of the theory that the citizen must always be accorded the prerogative of doing whatever he thinks right. Now the actions of preaching and writing are at once capable of becoming quite as injurious to the community as any other actions and quite as subject to rational restraint. . . . If there is only one true religion, and if its possession is the most important good in life for States as well as individuals, then the public profession, protection, and promotion of this religion and the legal prohibition of all direct assaults upon it, becomes one of the most obvious and fundamental duties of the State. For it is the business of the State to safeguard and promote human welfare in all departments of life. In the words of Pope Leo, "civil society, established for the common welfare, should not only safeguard the well-being of the community, but have also at heart the interests of its individual members, in such mode as not in any way to hinder, but in every manner to render as easy as may be, the possession of that highest and unchangeable good for which all should seek."

In practice, however, the foregoing propositions have full application only to the completely Catholic State. This means a political community that is either exclusively, or almost exclusively, made up of Catholics.[3]

Recent actual experience in the work of a City Mission Society is reported as follows:

Workers in those sections of New York unfrequented by business men or Protestant families of standing, particularly those foreign language areas which make up so large a part of our city, are witnessing a new wave of religious bigotry and persecution.

We are met with such challenges as "This is no place for a Protestant church." A father, whose boy was found throwing a stone through the window of one of our Italian churches, defended the boy on the ground that the church had no business to be there; that "the Bronx is Catholic and Protestants should keep out."

This particular church has had seventeen window panes broken during the past two weeks and no satisfaction from the police in any instance.[4]

With regard to Protestant evangelistic approach to Jews, Rabbi Levy says:

If we are to make ours an "Era of Understanding" between the faiths it should be axiomatic that no faith is trying to convert the adherents of another faith, because that would in itself negate all possibility of the proper attitude of mind towards one another. . . . The one who comes to convert another man holds that he is offering that other person something better than he already possesses. It is an assumption of superiority which the other man (in this case, the Jew) resents. It may appear strange to the Christian who has not tried to get the point of view of the Jew, that this Jew can claim that the doctrines of his faith are quite as lofty, quite as spiritual as those of the Christian. He holds that the Jew who understands and is faithful to the teachings of his religion may be just as fine a man, just as true to the

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[3] John A. Ryan and Moorhouse F. X. Millar, "The State and the Church," pp. 35-37.

[4] *Metropolitan Baptist Bulletin,* New York City, June, 1924.

most sublime teachings of religion as the Christian. The spiritually minded Jew is quite the equal of the spiritually minded Christian in the performance of his duty to man and God. . . .

The Jew goes still further in his resentment of some of the methods followed by Christian conversionists. He claims that for Christian missionaries to tempt little Jewish children with candies and other gifts to attend Christian Sunday schools, and to tempt starving men and women with offers of material support, if they will accept baptism, is unethical, because it is taking advantage of ignorance, or want, or both. The Jew resents the attempt to reach the weakest of his sons or daughters in what seems to him insidious ways.[5]

Lord Curzon in "Problems of the Far East" protests against Christians making a single statement of the Founder of their faith ("The Great Commission") the basis of a war on other faiths. Of course, it may be questioned as to how far this is a fair statement of the Christian basis or method of foreign missions. Concerning the inevitableness of the missionary work of the Church Mr. J. H. Oldham says:

The aim of missions is to bring men into the membership of the universal community of those who have been redeemed by God from bondage to the world and are dedicated to the fulfilment of His purpose. As the parts of the world are seen now to be inter-related and inter-dependent, so only a Church whose members are drawn from all peoples can truly serve the world. It must be a society which does not merely gather into itself individuals who leave their national and racial distinctions and traditions behind them, but one that takes up these differences into its life in order that that life may become richer, more varied and more complete. In this fellowship there can be nothing of patronage, nothing of superiority, though differences of function, of experience, of capacity may have full recognition. The fundamental equality of those who all alike depend on God for everything they have and

[5] Rabbi Clifton Harley Levy, "Should Christians Proselyte Jews?" *Christian Work*, January 24, 1925, pp. 113, 114.

all alike strive their utmost for the coming of His kingdom is of the essence of the fellowship.[6]

Dr. Kresge deals with this problem from the point of view of medieval and modern church practice:

Christianity began as a simple brotherhood; and the Church was called into being to perpetuate this brotherhood. But quite early in its history Christianity became identified with churchanity. As soon as the Church came into possession of great wealth and power, she began to develop an elaborate system of ecclesiastical machinery. She began to dissipate her life keeping her machinery running. She held services, rather than rendered service. She substituted her own program for the program of the Kingdom. She became an end to be served, rather than a means of service. The Catholic communities were drained of their resources to serve the Church, while the Church made no effort to return an equivalent in service. More money was spent for ecclesiastical paraphernalia than for constructive welfare work. In the best days of Spain the Church spent more money for the candles on her altars than she spent for education. . . .

Many of our Protestant congregations in our own country are spending too much money and energy in holding services which really do not serve. Like the Jewish Church in the days of the prophets and Jesus, and like the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages, we are still over-emphasizing the secondary matters of the religious program while we slight the fundamentals. We are still exalting the holding of services above the rendering of service.[7]

Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin declares his conviction on the principle involved in the fourth group of questions as follows:

The Church exists to make the world the Kingdom of God. In the holy city of John's vision there is no temple, for its whole life is radiant with the presence of God and of the Lamb. In the final order there will be no Church, for its task is finished when God is all in all. Meanwhile the Church has no excuse for being except as it continually renders itself less and less necessary. It has to lose itself in sacrificial ser-

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[6] J. H. Oldham, "Christianity and the Race Problem," pp. 263, 264.

[7] Elijah E. Kresge, "The Church and the Ever-coming Kingdom of God," pp. 139, 140.

vice in order to save itself. It must never ask itself, "Will the community support me?" but "Can I inspire the community?" As it seeks to do God's will, it can count on Him for daily bread; a more luxurious diet would not be wholesome for its spiritual life. It exists only to spend and be spent in bringing the children of God everywhere one by one under the sway of His love and presenting them perfect in Christ, and in putting His Spirit in control of homes, industry, amusements, education, government, and the whole life of human society, until we live in "realms where the air we breathe is love."[8]

So also speaks Dr. Ernest F. Tittle:

The great end that is set before the Church is the development, the enrichment, the Christianization of human life. But this great end is frequently lost sight of by people who compose the Church. They think of the work of the Church not in terms of human values, but in terms of ecclesiastical values. The first question that leaps into their minds when any new plan is proposed is not, How will this affect the lives of men? but, How will this affect the life of the church? How will it affect attendance upon the evening service or the morning service? How will it affect the treasury of the church? If people are urged to give to some new project, will they not have less to give to the church?

Such questions as these are not born of conscious, deliberate selfishness. They are frequently framed by people concerning whom many a beautiful act bears witness that in their personal lives they are splendidly unselfish. The psychology of the situation is somewhat like this: People believe in the Church. They have reason to believe in it. It has meant much to them. If it does not mean much to the multitude outside, it is plainly the fault of those who will not come in, not the fault of those who are in. If certain obdurate persons elect to remain outside the Church, so much the worse for them. Those who have found in the service of the sanctuary the spiritual nourishment which their souls require will see to it that nothing is permitted to jeopardize the interests of an institution that has meant so much to them, and which could mean much to many who blindly pass it by. They do

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[8] Henry Sloane Coffin, "Some Religious Convictions," pp. 203, 204.

not realize, these church-going people, that they are seeking first not the salvation of the community, but the salvation of the church. Unconsciously they are demanding of the community that it shall feed the church, not of the church that it shall feed the community.[9]

Professor Harry F. Ward discusses the question, Is Christianity revolutionary? as follows:

At a shop meeting the men pushed forward one of their number to ask the preacher a question. "You've bothered us long enough with your questions," they said. "Now here's a man who can answer you. Go for him!" His first question was theological. His second was this: "Was Jesus a rebel?" This is the vital issue with the social radicals: Is Christianity content with the world as it is or does it demand a thoroughgoing transformation? Is it working for reconstruction? This question demands that the missionary propaganda search its heart. What is it after? To build churches, to increase Sunday schools in order to multiply the number of saints in heaven? Or does it seek to make the civilization of man over into the civilization of God—to transform human society into the Kingdom of God upon the earth in order that thus man may come to know God and enjoy Him forever? Is Jesus still a rebel against civilization as He finds it? If His purpose is carried out in human society will the things of which the workers complain remain? Will there be poverty or crime or war or preventable disease? Will there be bad housing and a big death-rate? Will there be starvation wages and big fortunes, long hours and idleness? When Christianity understands its missionary purpose it finds that it involves the complete transformation of the whole of human life, individual and social. With the evil that is in the world there can be neither truce nor compromise. There is no other propaganda for social reconstruction which goes so far or demands such thoroughgoing change as the propaganda of Jesus.[10]

Again Dr. Ward says:

Their [the critics of social evangelism] favorite antithesis

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[9] Ernest F. Tittle, "What Must the Church Do to Be Saved?" pp. 23, 24.

[10] Harry F. Ward, "The Gospel for a Working World," pp. 148, 149.

is whether the Church is to save the social order or to save souls from hell, whether we need the arousing of a new social conscience or a revival of religion, whether the world is to be saved by perfect laws or by redemption, by a new industrial system or by individual regeneration. The answer, of course, is, "By both." These things are not in antithesis but are inseparable complements. There is no *"either or"*; it is *"both and."* There is no individual apart from the social organism, there is no social organism apart from the individual. The simple gospel on the lips of Jesus assumes this great fact and deals with both in all their relationships.

The one way of saving the social organism is through its constituent parts, which are individuals; the only way the individual can come to full salvation is by redemption of the social organism in which he subsists. To accomplish this joint end, men must be evangelized as *social beings.* They must be saved in all their group relationships, not as individuals abstracted from the world of reality, withdrawn from contact with their fellows and set apart in some arbitrary system of relationships with God. The fundamental error of those who insist that an evangel which talks about social conditions is neglecting the fundamental task of "getting the individual right with God" is that they are thinking of an individual who does not exist except in the realm of theology. . . .

The evangelism that carries the whole word of the Master and follows His method will not stop to consider results to the Church. Its results cannot be measured in terms of church gains. The value of the social ministries of the Church can never be determined by what they do or fail to do in bringing more people into the Church. This is no fair standard to apply to them. Their purpose is social, and while they will open points of contact for individual, personal ministry, their main results will be social—to be seen and felt but not to be counted. A city missionary society put a man at work among the Jews and then wanted to dismiss him at the end of the year because he had not built up a self-supporting church. What results would be secured in China by such a policy? It would dismiss even Jesus as an incompetent blunderer, an unprofitable servant. The Church must demand and secure efficiency in its efforts, but efficiency is revealed

inadequately and sometimes not at all by the figures that show gains in converts and income. The love of statistics possesses the modern churches as an evil spirit, and unless it be exorcised it will presently carry them far from the path of Jesus and run them headlong into the oblivion in which the world of tomorrow will bury those religious organizations that can find no bigger goal than the development of their own ecclesiastical life.[11]

Dr. John Douglas Adam has this to say with reference to the bearing of the character qualities of the individual Christian on the renewal of social values:

The fundamental social contribution of organized Christianity must be the bringing out into social life of the renewed and increased economic value of genuine Christian character. The creation of genuine Christian experience means the increased economic value of an individual to society. Without religion man naturally tends to crave more from society than he can contribute to it, in order to satisfy his restless inner life. On the other hand, when a man has a genuine Christian experience, he tends to seek his supreme satisfactions not from society, but from the unseen. His material cravings shrink through the expansion of his spiritual satisfactions. He tends to demand less from society, and to give more, because he brings a more efficient personality to the social situation. A new simplification of physical desire, a new mental concentration, a new conscientiousness, all make for a higher economic value.

While purely material democracy tends towards making the individual unsound in his economic value to society, genuine Christian experience tends to increase and give permanence to his economic value. Think of the vast economic burden flung upon society by godless living, and then think of the sound economic reserves springing from true Christian living. No sound economist can ignore the fundamental economic value of Christian character.

Then, too, how can there be a renewal of the values of society except through religion? Organized Christianity, if

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[11] Harry F. Ward, "Social Evangelism," pp. 55, 56; 134, 135.

it is spiritually vital and virile, will perform the moral equivalent of the astronomer in the observatory, who corrects the time in the town clock and the watches of the people. The renewal of social values proceeding from lives lived in the presence of God is a far more fundamental social contribution than legislation, even at its best. For legislation must ever be the result of public opinion, and public opinion which is not educated by the wisdom of God simply imprisons itself in its own deadening legislative enactments. The social implications of Christian character must ever be the supreme asset of society, for they make for individual economic soundness, the renewal of social values, and provide the moral impulse towards progress and solidarity.[12]

Canon Green, in the preface to his book on "Personal Religion and Public Righteousness," insists that all effective social advance depends on the religious dynamic as exemplified in personal life and character.

It is indeed a fair and necessary question to ask whether the advance, which we so earnestly desire, in public righteousness, will be attained without a great advance in personal holiness. Ten years ago, writing on the topic of personal religion, I suggested that the tasks before the Church were: (i) the re-statement of the one Faith; (ii) the reunion of Christendom; (iii) the conversion of the world to Christ, and (iv) the application of His teaching to social needs. To these tasks we must today add two more at least, namely (v) the refounding of civilization, shaken by the war, and (vi) the discovery of a way to international brotherhood. Is our religion adequate to these tasks? Are we good enough? . . . . It is my own deep conviction that a great advance in personal holiness will alone supply the necessary power in which the tasks before the Church will be performed. . . .

It may well be that some, anxious to do something to help a suffering and distracted world, longing, as they will say, to "get to work to help others," will be impatient with my insistence on the need for personal holiness, personal religion.

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[12] John Douglas Adam, "The Approach to the Modern Mind," in "Evangelism in the Modern World," pp. 85, 86.

If any reader does feel that impatience I can only repeat that this whole book is inspired by nothing else but the conviction that personal holiness is an absolutely necessary preliminary to all effective social service. For what the world really wants is not you or me, but God. And He can shine only through a sanctified personality, and work only through a surrendered will. When we have perfectly learned that truth no triumphs will be too great for us to achieve.[13]

Dean Inge, of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, has this to say:

The Church has its own work to do, without trying to enlighten political experts on their own subjects. The method of Christianity is the method of Christ Himself—never to speak or think of men in masses, never to clean the outside of the cup while neglecting the inside; never to try to reform men by reforming their institutions, but to appeal straight to the heart of the individuals. From within, not from without, comes all that exalts or defiles the character. Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good. Make men and women good Christians, and they will either make their institutions work, or alter them. This method of inwardness is perhaps the most distinctive and characteristic thing in Christianity. The leaven will, it is hoped, leaven the whole lump in time; but the Christian method is slow, far too slow for impatient and hot-headed people. It is a slow remedy, but a real one; whereas the method of altering institutions without even attempting to elevate individual character, which is the avowed program of Socialism, is no remedy at all. The old evils will all reappear. "The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."[14]

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[13] Peter Green, Canon of Manchester, "Personal Religion and Public Righteousness," pp. ix, x.

[14] The Very Rev. W. R. Inge, *Morning Post* (London), January 1, 1925.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE CHURCH SERVING THE COMMUNITY

### Questions

1. Community Needs and Activities.
   What are the outstanding needs of your own local community? What practical activities does your church undertake in order to serve the community? With what results? What community needs are not yet met?

2. Responsibility of the Church.
   Is your church's first duty to its own members or to the community as a whole? Why? Does the Church stand in the minds of the people of your community as the champion of large constructive social ideals? If so, what ideals? If not, why not? How determine whether the duty of the church to its own members or to the community is the more important in any given situation?

3. The Church and Other Community Agencies.
   Should the Church as an organization engage in such activities as the promotion of health centers, recreation centers, the care of the poor, settlements, hospitals, men's and women's hotels, etc., or should it rather inspire people to render such service through other agencies? If it should sometimes act directly and at other times through other agencies, what should determine which course to follow and when? If you assume that the community itself should do some of the things which your church is now doing, what steps can your church take to insure that the transfer is for the good of the community as a whole? If there are functions which other organizations are performing which should be undertaken by the church, how can the transfer best be brought about?

4. The Church and Community Evils.

What, if anything, should the Church do as a body with respect to community evils, like bad housing, civic corruption, discrimination against classes and races, the sale of liquor and drugs, bad prison conditions, unwholesome amusements? What responsibility, if any, has the suburban church in relation to city community problems?

5. The Church and Economic Life.

What, if anything, has the Church as an organization to do regarding the economic life of the community, e.g., with respect to wages, hours, strikes? When, if ever, should it take a stand with reference to such questions? Should it go further and advocate the reconstruction of the industrial system? If so, should reconstruction be pressed through individual Christian effort or collectively by the Church? If through the former, what agency can be used to this end?

6. Apparent Competition.

What is the significance, both to the church and to the community, of the increasing tendency on the part of both men and women of ability to transfer their principal public service from activity in the church to activity in social and political organizations? Some say that they leave unessential activity in the churches to undertake more significant leadership in other organizations. Does the Church, because of its origin and the source of its power, have a prior claim on the time and energies of its members, regardless of the quality and degree of opportunity for service which it offers them?

7. The Church and Public Opinion.

In what ways is the Church affecting general public opinion locally or nationally? Do the churches of your community express themselves on local questions clearly and

effectively? In what ways can public opinion be influenced most effectively by a local church or group of churches? Is action by an official board sufficient? Is it or is it not desirable that on great ethical questions which confront the nation the churches should be able to speak with a single voice? By what trustworthy methods can it be ascertained whether the churches are ready to speak with a single voice on this or that question? On questions on which there is a great divergence of judgment and conviction among Christians, e.g., pacifism, who is qualified to speak for the churches? Can the Church afford to be silent on such an issue? Is the average church too parochial in its outlook? If so, why? To what extent and how should its outlook be changed?

**Comment**

When this study has been opened by listing the needs of your community, the community activities of the church, and the needs that remain to be met, you will be ready to consider the fundamental questions which immediately follow and which are at the heart of the problem of this section.

Is the church's first duty to its own members? One church answered this question by putting up a sign that read: "This church exists for the sake of the people outside of it."

Should the Church as an organized body engage in community activities, attack community evils, take a stand on economic questions?

In answering these questions it would help if the leader should place on a blackboard in separate columns the reasons pro and con, including particularly such as grow out of actual experience.

Mr. E. C. Lindeman has traced the institutional evolution of the church and shows how:

Step by step the Church relinquished parts of its original or accrued functions. In the United States the Church was explicitly separated from the State, and from the sphere of

politics. Soon after the beginnings of the new nation, education was taken from the Church, and a little later philanthropy followed. The Church had long since abandoned economic control.[1]

He argues against the "institutional" church in its provision of playgrounds, cafeterias and other such agencies of service:

From the sociological viewpoint there are two possible dangers in this movement. In the first place it may prevent division of labor in such service. In the second place the church at times makes of these services vested interests, which will later make it difficult for specialized agencies to function properly in the community. There is an added objection from the viewpoint of the church itself, and that is the fact that the church's fundamental function of religious, or spiritual, motivation, is likely to suffer when it is encumbered with the doing of many things.

In small communities where there is but one church or in communities where there are a small number of churches it may be expedient for the church to render certain social services. If this is done with an idea based upon the assumption that specialized agencies will be brought to the community later to take over these services, such a program must be recognized as one of great value.

The law of the *division of labor* is based upon the following premises:

a. A specialized agency can perform services more efficiently than a general one.
b. The institution which initiates a program and then develops other agencies to take over this program, thereby retains more energy and time for its specialty.
c. A generalized program is likely to detract from the institution's primary function.
d. The specialized agencies have been called into existence as a result of the increasing complexity of modern social living. Their mission will be seriously hampered if generalized agencies promote similar programs.
e. The specialized agencies are here, and most of them are

[1] E. C. Lindeman, "The Community," p. 108.

likely to remain. General programs, promoted by institutions, are destined to produce serious overlapping and duplication of work.

A consideration of the law of the division of labor indicates that modern institutions grow by the loss of function, and not by the increase of function. In other words, they increase the intensity of their programs when in healthy growth; conversely, they extend their programs when they have become pathological and out of harmony with modern social process.[2]

"The Church and the Community," by Ralph E. Diffendorfer, is full of suggestions along the line of the following quotation from the Foreword:

Christians are only beginning to realize the mighty force which lies inherent in these local churches, separately and in cooperative groups. The Church has proved so worthily its power to cultivate its membership as a field for moral and spiritual growth that it gives confidence and hope that it will be aroused speedily to an appreciation not only of its latent power as a social force, but also of the right and duty of leadership in community affairs. How else can morals and religion come to dominate our modern complex social life?[3]

In considering the Church's duty in relation to economic questions, take account of what British soldiers are reported to have held as recorded in "The Army and Religion."

Practically all the more thoughtful young men of the wage-earning class feel that there is something utterly perplexing in the fact that the Church counts for so little in connection with social and economic reconstruction. They will never really fully believe in any Church that has not something to say about that matter, and that does not say it fearlessly regardless of consequences.[4]

How a group of English Christians dealt with a strike is recorded by Dr. Henry Hodgkin. This may help in the discussion of Question 5:

As I write there comes to my mind a meeting for worship held not many miles from London, and when all minds were

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[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 109, 110.

[3] Ralph E. Diffendorfer, "The Church and the Community," p. xi.

[4] "The Army and Religion," p. 214.

turned to the danger of a certain national strike developing into revolution. The meeting was being held after the manner of Friends, and prayer was offered for all parties and for a solution in accordance with the mind of Christ. Among the fifty or sixty worshippers were those whose sympathies were with the owners, and others who took the side of the strikers. Words were spoken which called us back to the deeper meaning of the strife, the grave issues involved, the thought of our Father's love and His will for His children. When the period of worship came to an end there was a spirit in the meeting that instantly responded to a suggestion that we should remain and discuss the situation. Light seemed to be given as to immediate action, and three persons were asked by the meeting to proceed to the strike headquarters. Negotiations between the parties had broken down. The three persons were able to get into touch with both sides and to keep open the doors which had been officially closed until, within a few days, room was made for a more formal reopening of negotiations. A small group, under the guidance of the Spirit, had been able to perform a very real service towards bringing peace into a situation where industrial war had already begun. If the Church were more eager to know the divine leading and more sensitive to the needs of the world, would not services of this kind be a common rather than a rare phenomenon?[5]

The same author discusses an American situation as an illustration of what is likely to happen when churches act unitedly in industrial crises:

A united Church, then, will be able to speak out on grave social evils and to call upon the nations to repent; she will arouse the public conscience; she will be fearless of the consequences to herself in loss of prestige and income; she will be ready to be misunderstood and will fear more when all men speak well of her than when she is persecuted as her Master was. When the Pittsburgh capitalists withdrew their support from the Young Women's Christian Association on account of its fearless social program, they were doing what would be constantly done by various groups if the Church were united in her passion against social injustice. Nothing

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[5] Henry T. Hodgkin, "The Christian Revolution," pp. 205, 206.

would unite the Christian bodies in a more splendid unity than a campaign of fearless exposure of evil that opened all alike to bitter attacks and left all in financial difficulties. This is the path toward Church unity that seems to me full of real hope. Dare we take it?[6]

The last chapter of "The Church and Industrial Reconstruction" is entitled "What the Church Can Do," and contains many suggestions that will assist in answering the fifth group of questions. The following quotation bears also on the questions of the third group:

The extent to which the Church as an institution shall itself engage in practical activities of social betterment is one which cannot be answered by a generalization. This must necessarily be determined in large measure by the special conditions in which a given church finds itself. Every local church should have its own forms of social ministry, which it carries on in the interest of the community welfare, and the particular conditions in certain communities may lay upon the church the responsibility for a great program of practical service. Certainly if there are human needs which are not being met by other agencies, they present to the church a clear call either to undertake a program of special effort in its own name or to see that other means of meeting the need are called into being.

The distinctive function of the Church, however, in the securing of a better social order does not lie in a multitude of independent administrative efforts, but in being the never-ceasing inspiration of such efforts by all Christian men in their various capacities as employers, employees, or socially-minded citizens. The Church should by its preaching so effectively hold up the Christian ideal, and make so clear what is involved in its application to the existing social conditions of the present day, that it will be constantly sending out its members to give themselves whole-heartedly to social betterment and thus be the great dynamic of a host of practical endeavors toward a more Christian society.[7]

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 208.

[7] The Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, "The Church and Industrial Reconstruction," pp. 233, 234.

In considering the question of whether thoroughgoing industrial reconstruction is necessary, the report of the Archbishop's Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems reaches the following conclusion:

When every allowance has been made both for the good qualities elicited by the industrial system and for the incidental defects which are likely to be found in any system whatever, we, nevertheless, find it impossible to resist the conclusion that, in certain fundamental respects, that system itself is gravely defective. It is defective not merely in the sense that industrial relations are embittered by faults of temper and lack of generosity on the part of the employer, of the employed, and of the general public alike, but because the system itself makes it exceedingly difficult to carry into practice the principles of Christianity. Its faults are not the accidental or occasional maladjustments of a social order, the general spirit and tendency of which can be accepted as satisfactory by Christians. They are the expressions of certain deficiencies deeply rooted in the nature of that order itself. They appear in one form or another not in this place or in that, but in every country which has been touched by the spirit, and has adopted the institutions, of modern industrialism. To remove them it is necessary to be prepared for such changes as will remove the deeper causes of which they are the result.

We cannot, therefore, agree with the view sometimes expressed which would allow Christians to take for granted the general economic arrangements of society, and would confine their attention to supplementing incidental shortcomings and relieving individual distress, in the belief that if men will live conscientiously within the limits of established industrial arrangements, without seeking to modify them, the result will be such a society as can be approved by Christians. . . . The solution of the industrial problem involves, in short, not merely the improvement of individuals, but a fundamental change in the spirit of the industrial system itself.[8]

In answering the last question of the fifth group, ask how much truth there is in F. W. Robertson's words uttered

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[8] Archbishop's Fifth Committee of Inquiry, "Christianity and Industrial Problems," (1919), pp. 51, 52.

sixty-five years ago and decide what, if they be truth, the Church ought to do.

Brethren, that which is built on selfishness cannot stand. The system of personal interest must be shivered into atoms. Therefore, we, who have observed the ways of God in the past, are waiting in quiet but awful expectation until He shall confound this system, as He has confounded those which have gone before. And it may be effected by convulsions more terrible and more bloody than the world has yet seen. While men are talking of peace and of the great progress of civilization, there is heard in the distance the noise of armies gathering rank on rank; east and west, north and south, are rolling towards us the crashing thunders of universal war.[9]

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[9] F. W. Robertson, "Sermons," Third Series, Ninth American from Fourth London Edition, p. 252.

# CHAPTER X

## CHURCH ORGANIZATION

### Questions

1. The Organization of the Local Church.

   Make a list of the separate organizations existing in your own church.

   a. How many of these have distinctive fields and tasks and how many overlap?

   b. What needs exist, if any, which your church is not organized to meet, but which it should be prepared to meet?

   c. Do you think that your church is over-organized or under-organized?

   Evaluate the local church organizations of which you are a member from the standpoint of efficiency and analyze the causes of their inefficiency, where such exists.

2. General Church Organization.

   Make a list of the organizations, denominational and otherwise, to which your church is related.

   a. In how far have these organizations helped you directly or indirectly to live the Christian life?

   b. In how far have they helped your church or hindered it in performing its total task?

   c. What evidence is there, if any, that official church organization, general or local, seriously affects the prophetic character of the Church as a whole or of its ministers, favorably or unfavorably?

   d. To what extent, and why, is the local church responsible for the work of its own agencies? For the work

of the agencies of the denomination as a whole with which it is affiliated?

3. Women in Church Organization.
Why do so many denominational and interdenominational organizations still fail to provide for the effective participation of women in their national boards, conferences and committees? Is such participation desirable?
   a. What qualities in some men incapacitate them for working democratically with women?
   b. What qualities in some women prevent their working democratically with men?
   c. Some say that the most satisfactory democratic discussion will not take place unless both men and women take part in it. What do you think?
   d. What adjustments, if any, in the local church or in denominational procedure in general should be brought about in this connection?

4. Church Unity.
Are denominational divisions actually a help or a hindrance to the realization of the Christian way of life in the world? Are they necessarily so?
   a. If you believe that some kind of church unity should be brought about, would friendly cooperation (general or local) be more or less effective than organic church union? Give your reasons.
   b. If you believe in church unity of any sort would you put the first emphasis on bringing about local or national unity?
   c. What measure of unity has been already attained?

**Comment**

Estimate the truth in the following oft-quoted protest of William James against "big" organizations and consider

what bearing it has on some of the questions in this section:

As for me, my bed is made! I am against bigness and greatness in all their forms, and with the invisible molecular forces that work from individual to individual, stealing in through the crannies of the world like so many soft rootlets, or like the capillary oozing of water, and yet rending the hardest monuments of man's pride, if you give them time. The bigger the unit you deal with, the hollower, the more brutal, the more mendacious is the life displayed. So I am against all the big organizations as such, national ones first and foremost; against all big successes and big results; and in favor of the eternal forces of truth which always work in the individual and immediately unsuccessful way—underdogs always till history comes, after they are long dead, and puts them on the top.[1]

It is commonly said that the churches are over-organized. See whether this is true of your own church. As to general overhead organization and appeal there is frequent protest by pastors and local churches. This point of view was expressed in an article by Dr. Willard L. Sperry in which he protested against the multiplicity of appeals in behalf of all sorts of good causes outside of the churches. Concerning the appeals of denominational organizations:

He would say to his denominational representatives quite candidly that he can no more substitute the World Movement of our denomination for the idea of God than he can substitute the trichina or Senegambia. And that is what, at times, it seems to him that he is expected to do. Organizing teams, and appointing captains by their tens and hundreds, and fine-tooth-combing the parish once more is not necessarily having a religious experience; and the parish minister is on the ragged edge of concluding that about the quickest way to undercut the whole support of the Church-at-Large is to let its programs and machinery get into the foreground and stay there. For men will not permanently, or even long, accept as a substitute for the public worship of God a congregational committee meeting on Sunday morning to discuss in detail the blue-print plans of the New Jerusalem.

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[1] William James, "Letters," Vol. 2, p. 90.

The parish minister insists upon some restoration of his ancient liberty of prophesying, not because he is indifferent, or wishes his church to be indifferent, to any and all of these claims on time, thought, service, and money, but because he feels the danger of religious short-sightedness, and even of fanaticism, in the urgent clamor of these many voices. He believes that if men can be helped to true and adequate ideas of God, godly men, to whom the task comes immediately home, . . . will maintain all . . . valid causes outside the Church and inside.[2]

In considering this problem do not fail to consider the churches' extra parish responsibilities, and the necessity for strong organization if a world-wide Christian program is to be developed and maintained.

In discussing the question of the cooperation of men and women in church work the point of view expressed by Miss Maude Royden should be taken into account:

It is a sense of something that is to me indescribably foul in this opposition to the spiritual ministry of women that makes us so conscious that it must be overcome. In the political fight I have met with brutality, with coarseness, even with violence, but I never met in the course of the political struggle with that certain quality of insult and abasement that I have met in the ecclesiastical world. I am aware that there are thousands of people who oppose that thing for which I stand for reasons that are, if not sufficient, perfectly honest and good and sincere; but there is also a certain uncleanness of imagination in the minds of some of those who are our most determined opponents, a quality of uncleanness about womanhood and about sex, which is our last worst enemy, and which must be defeated if the relations between men and women are to be as sane, as wholesome, as sweet, as lovely as God surely meant them to be when we are told that: "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."[3]

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[2] Willard L. Sperry, "A Parish Minister's Declaration of Independence," *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1921.

[3] Maude Royden, "Women and the Gospel of Christ," *Christian Work*, August 16, 1924.

When considering the questions involved in Christian unity consider whether the best approach is to be made along the line of creed and organization or of life and work. The following questions submitted by the World Conference on Faith and Order have a special bearing on the question of unity from the point of view of the Christian way of life:

1. Is it agreed that the ideal of individual life is such as is represented by the Beatitudes and by Saint Paul's account of the fruit of the Spirit, and that this is a specifically Christian character and stands opposed to worldliness, self-assertion and ambition which are un-Christian?
2. Is it agreed that we unite in believing in the absolute value of every human soul in the sight of God, and in the equality of all men before God as the subjects of one redemption offered to all because all have sinned?
3. Is it agreed that this equality of men as subjects of the redemption in Christ does away in the Church with the distinctions of race, color and class, and, if so, in what sense?
4. Is it agreed that, inasmuch as all men have one Father and are therefore brethren, the basis of all social ethic is the principle of love?
5. Is it agreed that the principle of love involves that in all human society the objects of fellowship and service must be pursued, and rivalry and ambition disowned as un-Christian?
6. Is it agreed that property must be regarded as a trust and not as a possession?
7. Are there any other elements of the Christian ideal which it would be important for the Conference to affirm?[4]

Dr. Rauschenbusch is insistent that:

To become fully Christian and to do their duty by society the churches must get together. The disunion of the Church wastes the funds entrusted to it, wastes the abilities of its servants, and wastes the power of religious enthusiasm or turns it into antisocial directions. Civil war is always bad;

[4] World Conference on Faith and Order, "The Christian Moral Ideal" (Fourth Series of Questions for Preliminary Discussion).

it is worst when a nation is threatened by outside enemies and the very existence of the fatherland is in danger. Some Churches are so far apart on essential matters that union is hopeless for the present. But the great body of Protestant Christians in America is simply perpetuating trivial dissensions in which scarcely any present-day religious values are at stake.[5]

A mediating view between denominationalism and organic church union is presented by Dr. Charles S. MacFarland:

Federal unity is stronger and more vital than the first form of unity, represented by the Vatican, because it is unity with freedom, and because unity is stronger without uniformity than with it. The social difference between the unity of the Federal Council and the unity of Rome is also thus: With federal unity the Church may give herself for the sake of the world, regardless of what becomes of herself; she may give herself for the sake of humanity and not for the sake of herself; while under the unity of Rome she is obliged first of all to take care of her own life. We must be willing to save our life by losing it.

Federal unity, however, recognizes the two principles of progress, differentiation and coherence. It recognizes that the Kingdom of God does not mean solitariness on the one hand or uniform consolidation on the other. It is simply genuine cooperation without regard to the ultimate result to ourselves. It is not trying to get men to think alike or to think together. It is first willing that the army should be composed of various regiments with differing uniforms, with differing banners, and even, if necessary, with different bands of music at appropriate intervals, provided they move together, face the same way, uphold each other, and fight the common foe of the sin of the world with a common love for the Master of their souls, for each other, and for mankind. It is unity without uniformity; diversity without divisiveness; comprehensiveness, not competition or compulsion.[6]

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[5] Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianizing the Social Order," pp. 463, 464.

[6] Charles S. MacFarland, "Progress of Church Federation," pp. 23, 24.

A most helpful statement of the stage reached in movements toward unity can be found in Dr. William Adams Brown's book, "The Church in America," Chapter XIII ("The Churches Getting Together").

# CHAPTER XI

## THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

### Questions

1. Church Members and Politics.
   Should a church member have more or less to do with politics than a non-church member? Give reasons and indicate how, if at all, the political activities of a church member should differ from those of a non-member.

2. When Ideals Conflict.
   If the State adopts a policy which the Church regards as contrary to the Christian way of life what is the Church to do? What is the individual to do? Under what conditions, if any, is the Church justified in supporting a national policy involving war or economic imperialism? What is the duty of the individual Christian?

3. Corporate or Individual Action.
   In acting on such matters as child labor, tariffs, free speech, the liquor traffic, the League of Nations, the alleged misuse of the Monroe Doctrine, or other economic and political issues, should church members function as individual citizens or corporately as an organized body? Some say the Church as an organization should never take a stand against political evils; others maintain that the Church loses its soul whenever it does not act courageously in such matters. Why do people take these different attitudes? Should the Church as an organization ever express itself on a question that is at issue between the major political parties? If not, why not? If so, under what circumstances? Does a moral question that becomes an issue in a political campaign thereby pass into a sphere

where the Church may not deal with it? If church members should act in some instances individually and in others collectively, how decide when the corporate and official and when the individual action is to be taken? If the Church should not act corporately, has it responsibility which it should otherwise discharge? Give reasons. It is claimed that in general many churches have taken a different attitude toward the liquor question than was taken in the matter of illegal business practices and anti-social industrial practices. If this is true, why has it been the case? Is it justifiable?

4. THE CHURCH AND LEGISLATION.
Should the Church try to enforce its moral standards through legislation by the State? Why? Why not? Should it seek to force its standards on citizens who may not freely accept those standards? If so, why? If not, on what grounds, if any, may it advocate what it conceives to be Christian ideals in legislation on questions like prohibition, divorce, child labor?

5. THE CHURCH AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.
How far does the present international character of the Church (or lack of international character) affect the possibility of the Church's functioning in the development of a Christian way of life among nations? What activities could your church promote which might make some contribution to the establishment of a more Christian international order?

**Comment**

This section raises questions that of late have been very much to the fore. "Getting out the vote," for instance, is said to be one of the duties of the churches. The general non-participation of Christians in practical politics is widely condemned or condoned according to the point of view. In reach-

ing a judgment on the first question keep in mind that politics is the machinery by which the corporate will of the people is expressed in the affairs of government, the administration of public affairs in the interest of the peace, prosperity and safety of the State.

Dr. William Cunningham, Archdeacon of Ely, asserts:

The duties of political communities lie in the mundane sphere, and the action of a Christian citizen does not necessarily differ from that of a man of any other religion, or of none. The doing of justice is a thing in which all good men of any religion will readily join; the forecasting of what is wise in the interests of the community is an intellectual effort, and differences of opinion as to what is expedient need have no direct connection with differences of religious belief. Christianity can, however, supply a motive force which will lead a man to see that he is not justified in attempting to live for himself alone, but is bound to do his best for other men as well, and to make use of his privileges on their behalf. Christianity may do little to help us to forecast the precise nature of what is best for the community at any place or time; but it does afford an incentive for trying to see our duty and for persisting in doing it.[1]

Dr. Elijah E. Kresge says:

The first thing the Church must do in her efforts to make the nation Christian is to fill her own membership and the citizens of her immediate community with a keen sense of their political duty and responsibility. Government is one of the most fundamental of social disciplines. Until the millennium comes there will be need of stable government of some kind. The members of the Church must be made to feel their duty to a discipline so fundamental as government. The Church must take just as great pains to make her members good citizens of the United States of America as she does to make them fit subjects of the New Jerusalem. She must make her members feel that politics is just as much a department of Kingdom service as Bible study or missions.[2]

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[1] William Cunningham, "Christianity and Politics," pp. 229, 230.

[2] Elijah E. Kresge, "The Ever-coming Kingdom of God," p. 230.

The question might be asked as to just how this keen sense of political duty and responsibility, called for by Dr. Kresge, is to be brought about. Two points of view are set forth in the Copec report on Politics and Citizenship:

Even among those who recognize the necessity of the State, and the legitimacy of its authority, there is sometimes evident a tendency to treat public affairs as so fundamentally tainted with anti-Christian interests that it is impossible for a Christian to allow himself to be in them. So far as this means that conditions may arise in which a Christian may be unable to associate with the existing organization of government, without in effect denying his religious convictions, there is an element of truth involved. But the tendency to which we refer often goes much further than this. It suggests that the religious life is, in its very nature, divorced from the actual organization of political societies. Its interests are eternal, spiritual, other-worldly, and as such have no bearing on politics, which are of the earth, earthy.[3]

On the other hand:

The function and purpose of the State is the establishment and maintenance of some moral order in life, a moral order for which justice is a convenient name, and its authority rests in the end upon this and upon nothing else. It is, therefore, impossible for a man who believes that life has a spiritual, a moral character, to rid himself of the responsibility of doing all that he can do to enable the State to realize the purpose for which it exists, and to embody in its actual working the spiritual principles which he holds to be right. . . . If citizenship is a right, it is equally a responsibility, a sacred and spiritual responsibility; and, in participating in or abstaining from, any particular form of political activity, the Christian citizen must be mindful of that responsibility. . . . A sense of personal responsibility for the use or non-use of the vote is the first condition of health in a democracy.[4]

It is the second group of questions that leads into the heart of a most urgent matter, that of the relation of the

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[3] C. O. P. E. C. Commission Report, "Politics and Citizenship," pp. 14, 15.

[4] *Ibid.*, 15, 17.

Church to war. The discussion that centered around Defense Day and the resolutions of church bodies concerning war show how much this question is coming to mean to the Christian conscience. Professor William Adams Brown summarizes the doctrine of Ritschl, the German theologian, which Professor Brown says is the doctrine of the modern State:

The supreme attribute of the State is sovereignty, and since there is no super-State to which all others are subject, each nation is ethically justified in asserting its own rights against others whenever it honestly believes them to be imperiled. Thus preparedness, in the sense of military armament, becomes the patriotic duty of every loyal citizen, and the possession of an army and navy strong enough to assert any rights to which the nation may reasonably lay claim is the foundation-stone of foreign policy.[5]

Dr. Brown summarizes the opposing view of the pacifists as follows:

They not only believe that Jesus' principles are applicable to State as well as to Church, but that they are applicable now. They insist that Jesus has laid down a definite method by which His principles are to be applied, which, if practiced by all Christians, would render possible the immediate realization of the Christian social ideal. In particular this method precludes the taking of human life for any purpose whatever. It outlaws war not only for the selfish purpose of moral aggrandizement or conquest, but even for self-defense, and, what is still more difficult to accept, in defense of others. The fact that the State has approved a war cannot alter its essentially un-Christian character. On so fundamental an issue the individual conscience must assert itself. To yield to the majority would be to deny the faith.[6]

He offers a third view (presumably his own) in these words:

To fight for oneself is one thing; to fight for others quite another; to fight as an assertion of the fundamental principles of liberty and justice, which refusal to fight would imperil, another thing still. There is no doubt that to multitudes in the late war the issue presented itself in the latter

[5] William Adams Brown, "The Church in America," p. 160.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

form. War seemed to them so great an evil that it was hardly possible to conceive a greater. Yet a time had come when to refrain from fighting would involve them in a worse evil still, and so with a clear conscience they gave themselves to the service of their country and believed that in so acting they were serving Christ as well.[7]

Dr. T. Rhonda Williams pleads for some measure of compromise on the basis of "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's" where personal ideals and State policy conflict:

It is far better to consent to pay a little tribute to Cæsar and get something done for God than to retire in a sort of personal pride of perfection which leaves society unserved. The way to get rid of Cæasar, so far as Cæsar is unjust, is not by refusing to pay tribute, but by doing our level best to get higher principles recognized in his realm and higher practices established, and to exercise infinite patience on the reforms that do not come as quickly as we desire. This was the way which early Christianity took in regard to slavery. The early Christian slaves paid tribute to Cæsar by continuing obedience to their masters, but worked for a higher ideal of social relationship by putting love into their life, and they were moulding the force that would ultimately destroy slavery. One cannot always do the highest and most right thing that one knows; sometimes the only way to serve that highest is to do something that is not the highest or most right.

If this is thought to be a somewhat dangerous principle one must remember that its safeguard is this: that we always maintain an unflinching loyalty to the highest in our hearts, and that all our compromises in the realm of Cæsar are made for the sake of a progress that lies beyond them, not for the sake of our comfort, or convenience, or advantage, but for the sake of helping mankind upward. So long as these are our intentions and ideals, faithfully served in the inmost sanctuary of the soul, none of our compromises will be harmful; they will all be to the good. "Man's reach exceeds his grasp, or what's Heaven for?" Compromises are all right

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

so long as they are on the upward road and made with the eye and the heart on the goal.[8]

Mr. Glenn Frank writes in *The Nation:*

The State may spend its time dilly-dallying with the problem of war; the Church dare not. If in the future the Church is to be more than an exhorting ambulance-driver in world politics it must choose now between Jesus and the generals.

It is so easy for the Church to say that as an organization it will not bless any war, and then follow such an assertion with a weasel phrase such as "except wars of defense and wars waged in a righteous cause." As if any nation ever admitted that it fought a war that was not in self-defense or in a righteous cause! . . .

I do not say that we may not find ourselves maneuvered into a position that will compel us to enter another war even within the lifetime of my generation. All I say is that if we find ourselves dragged into war by the stupidity or cupidity of political or industrial leadership, let us go into war honestly admitting that it is an ugly job that has been made necessary by stupidity and cupidity, and not insult the name and disgrace the Church of Jesus of Nazareth by fooling ourselves into thinking that we are entering a spiritual crusade. Even a war waged for what appears a righteous cause is a spiritually destructive process.[9]

On the general question of the authority of the State the Roman Catholic view is stated in the Pastoral Letter of the American Hierarchy, 1920:

The State, then, has a sacred claim upon our respect and loyalty. It may justly impose obligations and demand sacrifices for the sake of the common welfare which it is established to promote. It is the means to an end, not an end in itself; and because it receives its power from God it cannot rightfully exert that power through any act or measure that would be at variance with the divine law, or with the divine economy for man's salvation. As long as the State remains within its proper limits and really furthers the common good, it has a right to our obedience. And this obedience we are

[8] T. Rhonda Williams, *Christian Work,* March 15, 1924, p. 331.

[9] Glenn Frank, *The Nation,* June 4, 1924, p. 638.

bound to render, not merely on grounds of expediency but as a conscientious duty. "Be subject of necessity, not only for wrath but also for conscience sake."

The end for which the State exists and for which authority is given it, determines the limit of its powers. It must respect and protect the divinely established rights of the individual and of the family. It must safeguard the liberty of all, so that none shall encroach upon the rights of others. But it may not rightfully hinder the citizen in the discharge of his conscientious obligation, and much less in the performance of duties which he owes to God. To all commands that would prevent him from worshipping the Creator in spirit and truth, the citizen will uphold his right by saying with the Apostles: "We ought to obey God rather than men."[10]

It should be said, perhaps, that the quotation above does not adequately indicate the emphasis on the primacy of the Church in relation to the State, as often asserted by Roman Catholic authorities.

A Protestant view is that approved by the Copec Conference in connection with its consideration of the report of the Commission on Politics and Citizenship:

The purpose of the State is to bind men together in a justly-ordered social life, and its authority ought to be generally accepted by Christians. The duties of citizenship are a sacred obligation for Christian people. The authority of the State is limited by its functions, and ought to be challenged by the Christian conscience only in the name of God. Christians should be willing, while their strength lasts, to spend and be spent in its service."[11]

This Commission said further:

In making the choice between obedience and rebellion, a Christian will naturally consider whether or not the action of the State actually makes, or tends to make, the practice of the Christian life difficult; whether or not it encourages immoral conduct or thought; what probability there is of establishing a system of government more satisfactory in these re-

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[10] Quoted by John A. Ryan and Moorhouse F. X. Millar, "The State and the Church," pp. 237, 238.

[11] The Proceedings of C. O. P. E. C., p. 225.

spects, and what will be the cost, *in moral values,* of establishing it?[12]

On the relation of the Church to the State Dr. Rauschenbusch says:

Ideally the State is the organization of the people for their larger common interests. Actually all States have been organizations of some section of the people to protect their special interests against the rest. Ideally the chief function of the State should be the maintenance of justice. Actually the chief function of most States has been the maintenance of existing conditions, whatever they happened to be. The State is the representative of things as they are; the Church is the representative of things as they ought to be. In so far as it is loyal to this duty it must be in perpetual but friendly conflict with the State, pushing it on to ever higher lines of duty. Nothing better could happen to any State than to have within it a Church devoted, not to its own selfish corporate interests, but to the moral welfare of humanity, and nudging the reluctant State along like an enlightened pedagogue.[13]

The questions of the third group involve a general issue on which there is much difference of opinion. Consider the point of view set forth in the following quotation from an address by David Lloyd George, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, in an address to the clergy in Cardiff, 1916:

It seems to me to be the sphere of influence of the churches, not to support particular parties, not to advocate particular measures of reform, but to create an atmosphere in which it will be impossible for anybody to remain a ruler of the realm unless he deals with those social problems. . . . The first thing we have got to do is to create a temper, a spirit, an atmosphere that will compel men of all parties to deal with these problems, whichever party is in power for the time being. The responsibility of the churches is this: The Churches of Christ in this land guide, control and direct the conscience of the community. No interest, however great it may be, can long withstand the resolute united opposition

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[13] Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianity and the Social Crisis," pp. 186, 187.

of the churches. Public opinion in this land invariably responds to the call of the United Churches. . . . The function of the Church is not to engage in party brawls. It is not to urge any specific measure. It is to create an atmosphere in which the rulers of this country, whether in the legislature or the municipalities, not only can engage in reforming these dire evils, but in which it will be impossible not to do so.

Dr. Cunningham takes a somewhat different attitude. He says:

To produce the desired result it is necessary not only to create an atmosphere, but to agitate it into a gale. Such agitation must almost necessarily involve the clergy in active participation in party politics, by signifying approval of the measures of one party and denouncing the neglect of the other. . . . It is specially to be feared that the Christian minister who feels called upon to use the pulpit for political agitation, is going outside the terms of his commission; he has a trust imposed upon him, and it is his duty to declare the eternal truth which has been revealed to man by our Lord. But in connection with the passing of any legislation the questions which arise are chiefly matters of expediency and of forecasting the probable results of the measure. These are at best matters of opinion. The preacher's opinion may be a good opinion, or it may be a mistaken opinion, but it has no pretensions whatever to be a declaration of Divine Truth.[14]

In F. W. Robertson's Sermons these words occur:

Christianity is the Eternal Religion which can never become obsolete. If it sets itself to determine the temporary and the local, the justice of this tax, or the exact wrongs of that conventional maxim—it would soon become obsolete; it would be the religion of one country, not of all.[15]

On the question of social legislation an Episcopal Synod Conference held at Atlantic City in 1924 took the following action:

The Conference would affirm its conviction that the business of the Church embraces the whole scope of life. And

[14] William Cunningham, "Christianity and Politics," pp. 193, 197.

[15] Frederick W. Robertson, "Sermons," Second Series, Third American from the Fifth London Edition, p. 35.

inasmuch as legislation registers the focusing and formulation of public opinion with respect to social needs, it is the business of the Church to see to it that as far as it has influence, such legislation should have a Christian soul. Therefore, when any question arises with definite bearing upon the moral or spiritual welfare of the community, the Church as a corporate body should give active support to the best concrete proposals tending to promote social welfare. As illustrating the kind of proposals which should enlist this corporate support we would cite the Permanent Court for the Adjustment of International Disputes and any worthy measures looking toward improvement in the equipment and conduct of our state and county institutions.

President Coolidge, at the unveiling of the Francis Asbury monument in Washington, D. C., October 15, 1924, had this to say about the dependence of government upon the development and maintenance of the spiritual qualities and values of life:

Our government rests upon religion. It is from that source that we derive our reverence for truth and justice, for equality and liberty, and for the rights of mankind. Unless the people believe in these principles, they cannot believe in our government. There are only two main theories of government in the world. One rests on righteousness, the other rests on force. One appeals to reason, the other appeals to the sword. One is exemplified in a republic, the other is represented by a despotism. The history of government on this earth has been almost entirely a history of the rule of force held in the hands of a few. Under our constitution America committed itself to the practical application of the rule of reason, with the power held in the hands of the people.

This result was by no means accomplished at once. It came about only by reason of long and difficult preparation, oftentimes accompanied with discouraging failure. The ability for self-government is arrived at only through an extensive training and education. In our own case it required many generations and we cannot yet say that it is wholly perfected. It is of a great deal of significance that the generation which

fought the American Revolution had seen a very extensive religious revival. . . .

The government of a country never gets ahead of the religion of a country. There is no way by which we can substitute the authority of law for the virtue of man. Of course, we can help to restrain the vicious and furnish a fair degree of security and protection by legislation and police control, but the real reforms which society in these days is seeking will come as a result of our religious convictions, or they will not come at all. Peace, justice, humanity, charity—these cannot be legislated into being. . . .

We cannot depend on the government to do the work of religion. We cannot escape a personal responsibility for our own conduct. We cannot regard those as wise or safe counselors in public affairs who deny these principles and seek to support the theory that society can succeed when the individual fails.[16]

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[16] President Calvin Coolidge, "Religion the Safeguard of a Free Nation," *The Christian Advocate*, October 23, 1924.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE

### Questions

1 THE IDEA.

If a person who knew nothing of Christianity were to ask you if there is a Christian way of life which, if followed, would lead to the solution of our racial, international and industrial problems, what would you tell him?

2. THE SOURCE.

If he desired further to know just what the Christian way of life is, would you refer him to any or to all of the following, and what help, if any, might he expect to get from each?

The life and teachings of Jesus.

The teachings or creeds of the Churches.

The standards of practice of those who call themselves Christians.

The practice of the smaller number who take Christianity seriously as a way of living.

3. THE PRINCIPLES.

Are there general ideas or principles of Christian social living to which all Christians are presumably committed? If so, what are these?

4. THE APPLICATION.

Is it possible to determine what these general ideas or principles involve when face to face with a concrete situation today? Is there, e.g., a "Christian" way of running a factory? Of deciding what to do about war? Of solving a delicate problem of race adjustment? If so, how are we to discover it and to secure agreement and action on it?

5. THE CONCLUSION.

Does life today make for individualism or for social solidarity and cohesion? Which tendency is desirable for society? Whatever be your answer, is the Church an effective agency in promoting the objective you regard as the more desirable? What more might the Church do to bring about the good life? Just what would you like to see done to and by the Church in this connection?

How is the general social sense and conscience of a people to be cultivated? Ought it to be so cultivated? What forces and agencies among us are making this contribution to life? How would you appraise the Church in relation to other forces and agencies in this regard? What special advantages does it have, if any, to this end? What special disadvantages? Would your answers be the same with respect to the cutlivation of international-mindedness among any people? Just what, if anything, is the Church doing to promote the general social sense and conscience? What to promote international-mindedness? What to promote the sense of human solidarity in general? What should it be doing?

**Comment**

It has been a question with the Commission as to whether this section should come at the beginning or at the end of the study. It has been put at the end in order that the other sections might be studied without the possibility of any slightest bondage to a set of predetermined assumptions. The issues raised in this section are, however, the basic ones in the whole Inquiry, and whatever sections any group may be compelled to omit, this should not be one of them. In order that the minds of the group may be wholly unbiased in their approach to these questions no citations of source material are offered. The questions themselves appear to be sufficient.

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National conference on the Christian way of life

Why the church?

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